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BRIGHT RAYS

AND

REVIVING SHOWERS;

OR,

A Book for all Characters and all Times.

By

REV. JAMES SMITH,
Author of "The Believer's Triumph," &c.

PREFACE

TO glorify God, by doing good to men, is the great end of the present life; and it is only as we keep the eye on this object that we answer the design of God in our creation and salvation. The Lord has formed us for himself, that we may show forth his praise. God aims at our welfare in connection with his own honour, in all that he does; and in proportion as we are taught by his Spirit, influenced by his love, and ruled by his word, we shall do the same. Self must be dethroned, that Jehovah may be exalted. Selfishness must be crucified, that benevolence may be displayed. God must be imitated in his moral perfections if we would prove our relationship to him, or union with him. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." Thus spake Jesus to his beloved disciples. "Be ye imitators of God as dear children," is Paul's exhortation to his brethren at Ephesus. And thus we are exhorted by the Holy Spirit, through him

To bring souls to Christ is of immense importance, and to stir up believers to assist in doing so is only second in importance to it; and such is the aim and object of this book. Yes, to glorify God by bringing souls to Christ, and to stir up believers to engage in this great work, *is the object* we have in view. Reader, we *wish to render you holy* and happy; and this can only *be done by leading you* to receive Christ as your Saviour.

l happiness to ourselves.

this work you will find variety, and yet h
as well as gospel; works, as well as faith;
as light; bright beams as well as dark clo
. to awaken conscience, to arouse the affec
to the Saviour, to consecrate to God, to e
ervice for his praise. Time flies, death is
, and eternity is just before us; let us, tl
: while we have the opportunity, as it will
for ever. Reader! are you in Christ? I
Spirit of Christ? Are you labouring for
your object and aim to bring sinners to
ier these questions well. They are deeply
of the last importance. If you are a stu
rimental religion, may the Lord make tl
: a blessing to you. If you are a believer
ying nearness and fellowship with him, lif
t to God, that he would accompany th
ument with his own powerful blessing. (
usest the weak things of this world, an
are despised, use this little book for the g

CONTENTS

	Page
Divine Care,	9
The Sons of God,	15
The Christian's Daily Prayer,	20
The Word of Command,	27
An Unwise Son,	34
Counsel and Comfort,	39
Purity,	44
Power with God,	51
Consistent Teaching,	59
What is your Life?	67
Why was I Born?	75
What is my Business?	79
For what End have I Lived?	84
The Love of Christ,	88
The Weaver's Shuttle,	92
Affection Baffled,	97
A New Year's Motto,	104
The Prayer of Moses,	112
Source of Comfort,	119
drances to Conversion and Church Member- ship,	128
Safeguard,	136
Late,	142
Design of the Gospel,	147
rd for Servants,	152
d to Servants,	158
eligion,	166

ounsel, ... 201
nplaining, ... 206
Lord is thy Keeper," 212
ent Monitor, ... 219
i to Ministers, ... 226
i to Deacons and Members, ... 230
or Man's Course and Comfort, ... 235
r of Death, ... 242
uiry for the New Year, ... 250
stolic Requirement, ... 256
uestion Improved, ... 264
Question Improved, ... 269
uestion Improved, ... 274
or's Question Improved, ... 277
stions to You, ... 282
nation, ... 286
Day of the First Month, ... 291
r of Faith, ... 295
ayer, ... 306
ole to Deacons, ... 313
Christian? ..

BRIGHT RAYS

AND

REVIVING SHOWERS.

I.

DIVINE CARE.

"He careth for you."—1 PETER v. 7.

THE Christian's life is very much made up of cares and comforts. Cares spring from earth, comfort comes from heaven; cares prove him a sinner, holy comforts prove him a believer; cares flow in from a variety of quarters, true comfort from only one; cares come naturally, but comforts supernaturally. We shall be sure to have cares; but shall we have comfort? This depends on God's grace, which gives *it; and our faith*, which receives it. Cares *must be cast on our* God, or they will prove a

is, and the very one which of all would wish to do so. "The Lord you."

For *whom?* For *you*, who are begc o a lively hope by the resurrectio Christ from the dead; who are born f corruptible seed, but of incorrupti word of God, which liveth and abide For *you*, who are strangers and pilgr arth, as all your fathers were. Fo re placed in humble circumstan umbered with the poor of this w *ou*, who are compassed about witl ares, and who enjoy so few comforts urprised at the fiery trials which t hough some strange thing had hapr

the doubting and the confident. Believer, *He* cares for thee.

Who is it that cares for us? It is the *Lord*, "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy;" who is so great, that we have no adequate conception of his greatness; so good, that it is impossible fully to set forth his goodness; and so glorious, that no sinner can see his face and live. It is He who created all things by his word, who governs all by his wisdom, and upholds all by his power. His resources are infinite, his compassion exquisite, and his patience surprisingly great. He enters into all the circumstances of his people, is ever present with them, and rejoices over them to do them good. The angels obey him, the seraphim adore him, and all creation glorifies him: but though he is so exalted, so happy, and so unspeakably great, he careth for you; for *you*, mean as you are; for *you*, sinful as you are; for *you*, depressed and discouraged as you are. *He careth for you.* He cares for you individually, and according to the circumstances in which you are placed.

What does he do? He *careth* for you. He thinks of you. He watches over you. He *sympathizes with* you. He feels the deepest *interest in you.* He ever seeks your welfare.

He infallibly secures your good. Your misery touches his heart, your wants lie open to his view, and your cries enter into his ears. He cares for you more than for the proudest monarch on his throne, or the mightiest production of his power. He cares for you, and his care is constant: it is not fitful, or occasional, but ever the same. He cares for you, and his care is paternal: it is the care of a father for his child—the child whom he tenderly loves, and for whose welfare he feels the deepest concern. He cares for you, and his care is perpetual: he will never care for you less than he does at present; when age weakens you, when wants pinch you, when death appears just before you, he will care for you as much as he did in youth, or as he does at this moment. He cares for you, and his care is beneficial: it prevents innumerable evils, and secures the



and the evils it prevents. He careth for you, and his care is special: it is not the care which he has for the beasts which perish, or the sinners who die under his frown; it is care that extends to the very hairs of your heads, which are all numbered, and to all the events and occurrences of life, however minute or commonplace.

Beloved, here is our comfort. We may lose the care of an earthly parent by death; but the Lord ever liveth, and while he lives he cares for us. We may lose the care of a kind earthly friend, through the malice or misrepresentations of a foe; but the Lord ever loves us, thoroughly knows us, and never ceases to care for us. Here is the ground of our confidence for the future. We cannot put trust in a friend, or put confidence in a guide; we know not *where* we shall be, nor *what* we shall be, for we know not what a day may bring forth; but this we know, that God will care for us, and, caring for us, will fulfil his promises to us, and make all his goodness pass before us. If God cares for us, then let us cast all our cares upon him; let us live in daily fellowship with him; let us seek all our supplies from him. If God *cares for us*, let us not dishonour him by *nursing our doubts*, or encouraging our fears;

everything, by prayer and supplication
hanksgiving let our requests be made
unto God; and the peace of God, which
l all understanding, shall keep our hearts
nds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. iv. 6, 7).
attend to our Saviour's loving admoni-
"Take therefore no thought for the
r; for the morrow shall take thought for
ngs of itself. Sufficient unto the day is
il thereof" (Matt. vi. 34). We shall
be without a friend, however trying our
stances may be; or without a guide,
r perplexing or difficult our path. The
God is more than the care of all the
hosts; and if the care of God is not
nt to preserve, supply, and satisfy us,
thing is. The Lord help us to believe

II.

THE SONS OF GOD.

JEHOVAH determined not only to save his people, but to raise them to the highest possible honour and happiness; therefore he predestinated them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, to the praise of the glory of his grace. In the fulness of time he sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Thus the Father decreed our adoption, the Son came to redeem us from bondage, and the Holy Spirit takes possession of our hearts, teaching us to call God "Father." The purpose flowed from the Father's grace, the way was cleared by the Son's blood, and nature and knowledge are imparted by the Spirit's work. The Father's love is the source,

...ffects our freedom.
Father's throne. Thus we
to each of the Divine Pers
should daily bless the Fath
and adore the Holy Ghost; t
purpose, the Son's merit, and
in our thoughts and our s
Trinity we can form no scrip
tion; and no one understan
trine of salvation who does
three Divine Persons are enga

The sons of God are sinn
vinced of it, they deeply fe
over it, and seek to be rest
Th...

their supplies from his hand, and doing his will from the heart; or, if they cannot claim the relationship, they are ready to envy those who can, and sigh and cry for the Spirit of adoption, that he may bear witness with their spirits that they are the children of God. To them no privilege is so precious, no blessing so desirable, no favour so great, as to be able to claim and enjoy their covenant relationship to God. They suffer much from temptation, are often harassed with doubts, and are hated by the world which lieth in the wicked one. Here they have no continuing city, but they seek one to come; they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, as all their fathers were. They live by faith in God's promise, providence, and presence, and expect every blessing from his unmerited love. They know they have no claim, because they have sinned; yet they have confidence and hope, because God is gracious, and hath given them his word. They expect to be chastised, because their Father is wise; and yet often fret and complain when they smart under the rod. They long for their home, yet dislike the way to it; and they pray for deliverance, yet cleave to the earth. The sons of *God* are all singular characters: they see Him who is invisible, taste that the Lord is

Our joys will be peculiarly sweet, but our
ows will be proportionably bitter. If we
ıy the friendship of God, we must endure
hatred of the world. If we walk with
ıs in love, we shall be tempted and harassed
Satan. If we have confidence in God's
d, we shall be exercised with ten thousand
's. If we have the assurance of faith, we
ll be plagued with many gloomy doubts.
ur hearts are renewed by grace, we shall be
ressed with their hardness and indifference.
ve have the spirit of prayer, we shall groan
ause we know not how to pray, or what to
y for. If we are at peace with God, we
ll have a constant conflict in our own
oms; the flesh lusting against the Spirit

tressing us, and often causing us to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Our lives will be a paradox, and we shall understand the apostle when he says: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed....As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer!
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

"His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he find himself utterly lost.

"When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins;
When his pardon is signed, and his peace is procured—
From that moment his conflict begins!"

THE CHRISTIAN'S DAILY PRAYER.

"O Lord, remember me, and visit me."
JER. XV. 15.



HE prophet was in great trouble Life was almost a burden. Yet th Lord had promised to show hin special favour. He had promise to be with him, and that it should be well wit his remnant. But the promises which suppor us do not always cheer us. We have alway more wealth in our possession than we tur to account. But he falls on his knees—h looks up to his God. Oh, what a relief i prayer! We never value it as we do in dee affliction, when the heart must find vent c

sive! How suited to us! Let us look at this prayer, and make it our own. It is a time of trouble. Most are suffering from one cause or another. Oh, that the Lord would sanctify the sorrows of his people, and make the sufferings of his foes the means of their conversion!

"*O Lord, remember me.*"—Who can bear to be forgotten, especially by a kind, wealthy, and powerful friend? How could we bear to be forgotten of the Lord? But though he never will forget us, yet we may plead for a special remembrance. Lord, I am tried, troubled; and cast down; remember that I am thy child. Thou hast put me among thy children. I have called thee Abba, Father. Thou hast owned me at thy throne of grace, and I cannot live contented without thy smile and thy blessing. I am thy weeping child. The sorrows of my heart are enlarged; oh, bring thou me out of my distresses! Remember, I am thy friend. I have been reconciled to thee by the death of thy Son. I have committed my all unto thee. I have been familiar with thee. I have poured out all my heart before thee. I cannot be happy except thou think of me, send to me, and show me friendship. Remember, I am thy *soldier, engaged* in thy cause and quarrel. I *wear thine armour.* I fight under thy banner.

...member, I am thy servant. I have been long in the family. I love thy children. I sometimes enjoy thy work. But I am weak, beset with fears, and discouraged in the path of duty: oh, remember me!

Remember me, for I am in an enemy's land. It is not the country I love and long for. I am n a howling wilderness, where there are few riends, little pleasant food, or refreshing rest. am in a house of disease and death. All are uffering, and many are dying around me. emember my weakness, for it is great; my ars, for they are many; my temptations, for ey are violent; my infirmities, for they are merous and painful; and my present circum- nces, for they are very trying. Oh, remem- r my prayers, and answer it.

ance."

"*O Lord, visit me.*"—What is life without God's presence? What would the world be if God did not visit us? How could we bear it if he were to say, "You have had the last visit—I will come to you no more?" But he will see us again, and our hearts shall rejoice. He will come unto us, and he will bless us. Still, promises are not enough, if we are really alive to God. We want their fulfilment. We cannot be satisfied unless the Lord comes, and manifests himself unto us. O Lord, visit me, and soften my heart. It is hard and unfeeling. I have tried to melt it in vain. I have taken it to Sinai: there it grows harder. I have taken it to Gethsemane and Calvary; but no place, no scene, no subject will do. It must be thy

[redacted]d. Love is unsettled and wandering. from thee will fill me with confidence, ny expectations, and cause my whole glow with love. Then zeal will burn, ance will work, fortitude will spring up, ery grace that should adorn the Chris- haracter will be in lively act and exer- Oh, visit me, and brighten my evidences. re often so dim, so unsatisfactory, that I rive no comfort from them. I want to re that I am a Christian; to have no , no misgivings; to have every satisfac- *idence in my* heart and life; but unless *it me, I feel* certain I shall not. Oh,

visit me, and cheer my spirits. I am dejected and cast down. My comforts droop and die. I am low, in a low place. Oh, visit me, and confound my foes. They are many; they are powerful; they get access to my heart; they bewilder, confuse, and mislead me; they often cast me down wounded, and fill me with fear and dread. Oh, visit me, and perfect my resignation. I would yield to thy will in everything. I would prefer thy choice to my own. I would be perfectly satisfied with all thy arrangements. Oh, visit me, and produce this blessed, this desirable state of mind.

Beloved, God's remembrance is always fruitful, it always brings us good things. God's visits are always beneficial. They check every evil, nourish every grace, revive every virtue, and satisfy every really good desire. In this short prayer is all we shall want in life or in death. Are you concerned that God should remember you? Could you bear to be forgotten of God? Did God ever visit you in mercy? Has he visited you lately? Can you be satisfied without his visits? Oh, make the prophet's prayer your own, and daily cry, "O Lord, remember me, and visit me."

"Lord, when I quit this earthly stage,
Where shall I fly but to thy breast?

... my presence the
would be a dark and tiresome place

"When earthly cares engross the day,
And hold my thoughts aside from th
The shining hours of cheerful light
Are long and tedious years to me.

"And if no evening visit's paid,
Between my Saviour and my soul,
How dull the night! how sad the shade!
How mournfully the minutes roll!

"My God! and can a humble child,
That loves thee with a flame so high,
Be ever from thy face exiled,
Without the pity of thine eye?

"Impossible! for thine own hands
Have tied my heart so fast to thee;
And in thy book the promise stands,
That where thou art thy friends

IV.

THE WORD OF COMMAND.

"Go forward."—Ex. xiv. 15.

THIS supposes that you are in the right way; for if you were not, the command would be, "*Stop! turn about.*" We do not say to the careless sinner, "Go forward;" for he is in the road to hell, and every step brings him nearer to that awful place. To urge him forward would be a cruelty, and prove that we were hardened in sin. But if you have entered in at the strait gate—if you are in the narrow way—if you have professed faith in Jesus—if you are united to the Lord's people—if you are engaged in the Lord's work—if you are going to the land of promise which floweth with milk and honey, then "GO FORWARD."

Let us notice—

1. Some of the *inducements* to go forward.—Your Head, your beloved Saviour, is before you. He has travelled the path; and if you

merce, politics, useful inventions, the art sciences—all things are moving onward. shall the Christian, or the Christian Ch alone stand still or go backward? The forbid it. Forward, beloved friends, or heels will be trodden upon by those behin and those will pass you who have not h much to animate them and stimulate th you have. The times in which we liv peculiar; they are stirring times—every is awake, and most things appear to be wide awake than the Church of Christ.] ren, let us not sleep, as do others; but wake up, watch, work, and "go forward' courage and determination. *The state world requires it.* Popery is going for

heard the gospel. Millions who have heard it, have not believed it. Thousands are falling into hell every day, and thousands are coming into life to take their places, imitate their folly, and meet their doom. By the ignorance that prevails—by the cruelties that are practised—by the crimes that are committed—by the millions that are perishing—by the myriads that fall into hell, we beseech you, "GO FORWARD." *The condition of the Church calls for it.* What shall we say of the Church's condition? She is weak and feeble. She is carnal and selfish. She is poor and miserable. Her converts are few. Her soldiers are cowards. Her divisions are many. Her Lord is dishonoured. Her enemies triumph. Her rival makes head against her. If you would see the Church arise and put on her beautiful garments; if you would see her united and happy; if you would see her troops disciplined, her officers at their posts, her banners floating in the four winds of heaven, her enemies retreating, her triumphs increasing, her borders enlarging, and her converts fleeing to her as a cloud, or as doves to their windows, then "GO FORWARD."

3. *The consequences of not doing so will be fearful.*—If you do not go forward, you will go *back; for there is* no standing still. But to go

thine for ever." You w
character, and be covered with con
shame. Go forward, therefore, tho
culties, dangers, and obstructions ar
way. Go forward, for time is flying.
ward, for death is coming. Go forw
eternity is at hand. Go forward, and
bless you. Go forward, and Satan w
from you. Go forward, and angels wi
mend you. Go forward, and usefulnes
crown you. Go forward, and eternal
awaits you.

Sinner, forward to the hope set bef
he gospel! Rest not
efuge, until

Jesus will receive thee, and will save thee with an ever asting sa'vation. Young believer, go forward to the Church! Publicly profess thy faith in Jesus by being buried with him by baptism into death; join the ranks of his army; take thy seat at his table; and join his people in every holy exercise, in every praiseworthy enterprise. Brethren, fellow-heirs of the grace of life! brethren, fellow-combatants in the field of conflict, forward to the crown! Wrestle in your Saviour's strength! Conquer by his blood, and the word of your testimony! Fail not, faint not, slacken not your pace, until you sit down with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jesus, in the kingdom of God. Let this be our motto, always and everywhere, "GO FORWARD!"

"He is an unwise son."—Hos. xiii.

HOW many parents are trie
families! This appears
been the case from the l
Adam had a Cain—Abr
ımael—Isaac, an Esau—David, an A
lomon, a Rehoboam—Hezekiah, a
ınd thousands besides, "*an unw*
is is a source of grief, and a sore t
write not now for parents, but for t
t us endeavour to—

Describe a wise son. He is one who
instruction; especially if the ins

choose such as are moral, industrious, and devoted to God. He will pursue knowledge in every legitimate way, especially the knowledge of himself, of his duty, and of God. He will set his heart upon a worthy object, an object worthy of an immortal being, of one capable of enjoying the presence and blessing of God for ever. Having set his heart upon a worthy object, he will steadily pursue it until he obtain it. In a word, he will live and act as an intelligent, accountable, and responsible creature, who views time as introductory to eternity, the present as preparatory to the future. Let us now—

Glance at the criminal spoken of in the text: "*He is an unwise son.*" How is he known? What are his characteristics? He has closed his ear to the voice of wisdom, and he treats the book of God with contempt. He has neglected the most favourable opportunities of acquiring sound, spiritual, and useful knowledge. He has contracted evil habits, so that it is natural for him to sin, dishonour God, and debase his nature. He has chosen foolish companions, and has allowed them to lead him into folly, sin, and *shame*. He has squandered his *time and talents, spending his money for that which is not bread* and his labour for that

the great end of life, which is to
ance from sin, and a meetness ar
lasting life. He is now evidentl
how will his folly appear by-and-
in the light of a death-bed, or an e

Look at him: torn with conflic
he can have no peace. He is
bitter reflections, which will neve
excluded from happiness and
He is the sport of devils, and th
hell. No being in God's univer
but all join to condemn his folly a
doom. He must reap through
fruits of what he sowed in time
one to blame but himself. He h
himself. His destruction has b

Reader! are you *a wise son?* Is your soul set upon obtaining salvation? on obtaining it in God's way? Are you seeking it now? Are you determined to enjoy no rest until you rest in Christ? Salvation is the one object we should pursue until we enjoy it; and then, being saved, we should endeavour to glorify God to the uttermost, for the salvation he has so freely bestowed. Are you *an unwise son?* You have had convictions, but have you stifled them? You have felt concern, but have you drowned it in worldly pleasures or cares? You have been urged to repent, but have you rejected the admonition? Have you delayed and lingered? Remember Lot's wife. She lingered on the plain, and perished. Have you become hardened in sin? Oh, fearful state! But think again. You are not yet beyond the reach of hope. You are not yet rejected by mercy. The gospel still calls to you, the strait gate may be passed by you, the way of salvation is open to you—Jesus is willing to save you. Let me beseech you in God's stead to be reconciled to him. His mercy is great unto the heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. He will pardon all *your* iniquities, he will pass *by all your* transgressions, he will receive you *into a father's arms*, and press you to a father's

if you come to him with confessi
cation. "If we confess our sins
and just to forgive us our sins,
us from all unrighteousness" (
You have been once more warne
in vain? You are once more inv
will you still refuse? God's testir
once more delivered to you; will
ject it? Have you no fear of hell
no pity for your own soul? Have
for heaven? Have you made up
perish in your sin? Do you say
hope? But there is hope. There
for he that believeth in Jesus shal
he who he may; and if you beli
you shall be saved, without doul
him in him

VI.

COUNSEL AND COMFORT.

"Hope thou in God."—Ps. xlii. 5.

ELLOW-CHRISTIAN, we live in trying times. Nations are convulsed, thrones totter, crowns fall, confusion reigns, and men's hearts are failing r fear. We cannot but *feel;* but we ot to *fear*. There is enough to make us nd pray, but not enough to deject or own. The Lord reigneth. Our Saviour power in heaven and in earth. He every event, and will overrule every ice for the fulfilment of his word, and l of his beloved people. "He worketh gs after the counsel of his own will." ıy rage, infidels may blaspheme, pro- nay murmur, and real Christians may with alarm; but he says, "My counsel nd, and *I will do all my pleasure*." The *eth above* the water-floods; he remain- *for ever*. Therefore, let no man's

ake your bed, and sanctify your
u poor? He will answer your pr
pply your need. Are you sorrow
ll comfort you, and give you joy
row. Are you tempted? He will
u to be tempted above that you
ar. Are you bereaved? He will
you than ten children. He will b
the fatherless, and a husband to t
is a friend that loveth at all t
r lives to manifest his friendship.
perplexity? He will bring the b
y which they knew not, and make

mercy. Whatever may be your trial,
r inward or outward, personal or relative,
l or temporal, still "*hope in God.*"
, and do not *fret*, though the wicked
, and everything seems to be against
Hope, and do not *murmur;* for you have
and mercies more than you deserve, and
ıan some of your fellow-pilgrims. Hope,
not *despond;* for all things shall work
r for your good. Your God hath his way
whirlwind and in the storm. Hope, and
forebode; for light is sown for the right-
ıd joy for the upright in heart. Hope,
not *complain;* for your Lord forewarned
ıll that has happened. He told you that
world you should have tribulation, but in
ı should have peace. Hope, and do not
no, not even death; for he that hath
ıd doth deliver, and he will yet deliver
He hath delivered you in six troubles,
seven he will not forsake you.

in God; for *he is* gracious, merciful,
ffering, and abundant in goodness and
He is faithful to his word. He is full
to his children. He is pledged by his
› be a father to you. He will not fail
: *forsake* you. He will surely do you
d do you good even by your present

Iope in God; for *he has* lessings to bestow. He has it for you. He has , and he will supply all you can consistently the desire of them that ıear their cry, and will ɔd: for *he has said* to ll in no wise cast out;" st thy burden on the in thee;"—to every fficient for thee;"—to grim to the celestial l be iron and brass; ıy strength be;"—to er leave thee, I will ee." Hope th



however kind; not in events, however propitious; not in connections, however encouraging; not in evidences, however bright; not in prospects, however blooming. Hope in God, when you read his Word, when you attend his ordinances, when you face his foes, when you circulate his truth, when he hides his face, when your comforts wither, when your gourds die, when friends forsake you, when foes slander you, when health declines, when poverty approaches, when storms gather, when Satan assaults, and when death stares you in the face. Hope, and be not dismayed. Let hope be the helmet that guards your head; the anchor that steadies your vessel; and the friend that holds up your head when the water-floods overflow you. In a word, at all times, in all places, under all circumstances, hope thou in God; for thou shalt yet praise him, who is the health of thy countenance, and thy God.

PURITY.

"Keep thyself pure."—1 Tim. v. 22.



HAT cleanliness is to the body,
ness is to the soul; essential
health, happiness, and beauty.
many who have clean bodies
ry filthy souls. They pay attention to
tward man, but altogether neglect the hi
an of the heart. Yet nothing impure
ter heaven,—nothing unholy can enjoy
acious or glorious presence of God.
ost High cannot hold fellowship with imp
sin: where iniquity is indulged, commu
th God is effectually prevented. Ther
says "Wash you, make you clean."

and fervent prayer. Those who are much with God contract a natural dislike to sin, a love to holiness, and a growing desire for perfection. But "if we say that we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth." Light has no fellowship with darkness, but chases it away; God has no fellowship with sin, but condemns it in his law, crushes it by his Spirit, and cleanses it away by his gospel. brought home with power. He purifies the heart by faith. He sanctifies us through his truth. He washes us in the laver of his word, and effectually cleanses us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Blessed Lord, carry on the purifying process in our hearts! Set our whole hearts against sin, make it the abhorrence of our souls. Fill us with the deepest hatred to it, and make us groan whenever we in any measure indulge in it. Oh, to find sin the plague of our lives, the loathing of our souls, and holiness our element and delight!

But Paul was writing to a holy man;—to one who was washed, sanctified, and justified the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God; to one who was serving the Lord with a pure conscience; to his dearly beloved son; to a minister of the gospel of Christ; to one who had received both the

need caution, counsel, and exhortati
of us are safe any longer than God
and we have no right to expect tha
keep us but in the exercise of wa
prayer, and faith. The best of men h
and the best may fall. Those who
expected have, in an evil hour, giv
temptation; and what has been ma
There is now very much impurity in t
Few think that there is such a deptl
ment as there is. The curtain is no
partially drawn on one side, and we
ished at what the children of Isra

in thought what they would not do in deed; they become familiarized with the evil, and then, by-and-by, it is acted out in the conduct. Sin always hardens the heart, brutalizes the passions, and sears the conscience. It is by degrees that we are led into open transgression. The world within is far worse than the world without, bad as it is. The eye of God sees what would make us ashamed to lift up our heads among our fellows if it were known to them. Some do not seem to realize the evil there is in mental impurity. They yield to temptation, give way to folly, and perpetrate crimes in the chamber of their imagery; and do not feel ashamed, because no eye but that of God sees it; nor do they humble themselves, just because men are unacquainted with it. Some have reason to say with Solomon, though in a different sense to that in which he used the words, "I was almost in all evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly." Oh, what does God's eye behold of impurity, even in his own house, and among his own professed people! If the pulpit were exposed to the pews, or the pews to the pulpit, we should not be able to endure the presence of each other.

"*Keep thyself pure*" from actual uncleanness. *He that indulges* in unclean thoughts will soon

communicated to us. Belo
cultivate purity of thought, purpos
and action. Let us live under the i
that everything impure is odious in th
God; and that, while he hates un
anywhere, he especially hates it in
people. Young men, who live in lar
and cities, who are thrown into the co
loose professors particularly, be you
Keep a tender conscience. Realize
ever-waking eye of a sin-hating, sin-pu
God is upon you, and *fear*. But es
realize the tenderness and greatness
love to you in Jesus, and that nothing ca
or grieve him but sin; and so from l
yourselves pure. Impurity weakens fa
fuses the judgment, dogma-

Holy Spirit to sanction. The apostle, referring to evil men, evil principles, and evil practices, says, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and *meet for the master's use*, prepared unto every good work." Then he immediately adds, "*Flee also youthful lusts;* but *follow* righteousness, faith, charity, peace, *with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart*" (2 Tim. ii. 21, 22). We want more holiness,—more entire consecration to God,—more inward hatred to *all sin*,—more self-denial in all its thousand forms,—more non-conformity to the world,—and a more exact copying of the example of our blessed and beloved Lord and Master. We must not expect much success without this; nor must we expect this until we are thoroughly broken down and humbled before God, and take this word for our guide, "*Keep thyself pure.*" No holiness, no heaven.

Reader! how is it with you? Has God purified your heart by faith? Is your whole soul set against sin? Is your life one clear and strong testimony against the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life? Are you living *above* the world, *after* the example of the Lord *Jesus, for* the good of souls, and to the *glory of God?* Is holiness your element, sin

may the Lord make us thoroughly tensively useful, and teach us to pure.

"The deepest reverence of the
Pay, O my soul, to God ;
Lift with thy hands a holy he
To his sublime abode.

"With sacred awe pronounce hi
Whom words nor thoughts c
A broken heart shall please hin
Than the best forms of speec

"Thou holy God, preserve my so
From all pollution free ;
The pure in heart are thy deligh
And they thy face shall see."

hope; sad and distressing tidings reached him, and he scarcely knew what to do. Like the Christian pilgrim sometimes, the further he advances the more his trials increase. But he flies to a throne of grace. His burdened heart drives him to his God. He weeps and makes supplication—he wrestles and pleads with the Angel of the Covenant—he has "power with God," and prevails. This is just what is needed in the present state of the Church. She has much power of a certain kind, but it is power with God that is needed. This is more than numbers, more than gold, more than standing *well with the world*;—there can be no substitut *found for* "power with God."

) power with him. When the Holy S
nvinces us of sin, burdens us with a sen
uilt, alarms us with an apprehension of
sting destruction, we then feel the sad
equences of alienation from God. W
arious means to make peace with him, b
ail. At length he leads us to the cross
olds to us the wondrous love of God, ex
o us the nature of the Saviour's work,
he eye of the mind upon the Crucified
nd then the heart softens, the tears be
low, enmity is subdued, hope springs u
iance is placed on the glorious sacrifice
appears a friend, and reconciliation is eff
The love of God is shed abroad in the
and the sinner heartily loves God as the

a warm-hearted credit to God's word, and exercise confidence in God's veracity and faithfulness. We must endeavour to understand just what God means in his promises and proclamations, and give credit to them; and we must go to God, expecting that he will prove himself true and faithful to his word. Without faith it is impossible to please God, therefore we can have no power with God. Neglect or disbelief of his word pours contempt upon him; but attention to it, and confidence in it, does him honour; and when he sees us struggling with unbelief, fighting against the vile insinuations of Satan, and endeavouring to confide in his truthfulness, he looks upon us with approbation, sympathizes with us in our conflicts, and receives us at his throne with pleasure. Crediting his testimony, and confiding in his faithfulness, we have "power with God."

There must be *an abiding sense of our own weakness.* It was not until the patriarch felt himself unable to combat with his brother, and was broken down before God, that he prevailed. Weak Jacob overcomes the Omnipotent Angel. Nothing has such an influence upon our covenant God, as the sighs, groans, and tears of his *weak and humbled* children. The weak be*liever takes hold* upon God' strength, when

power to go against the great army of o
and our eyes are upon our God, then
is certain. Out of weakness we are
strong. The Lord fights for us, and
our peace. Oh, to see the Lord's peopl
oughly emptied out, and stripped of
rag of their own righteousness! to se
broken down before God's throne, under
sense of their weakness and insufficier
then we may expect that great good
done. But so long as we fancy we are
boast of our native powers, and rejoice
own resources, we shall be weak, feel

e greater our "power with God." A
quiescence in divine statements, a formal
ion of our needs, and a matter-of-course
tion to God, will do no good. We must
d we must feel deeply, before we shall
erful on our knees. Too many talk be-
od, rather than plead with God. They
om custom, not from necessity. Oh, if
ized that we were the friends of God, if
strong faith in God, if we were deeply
e of our weakness before God, if we with
ght earnestness applied to God, it would
seen that we had "power with God."
e must be *an habitual hatred of all sin.*
we indulge iniquity in our hearts, the
ill not hear our prayers. The image of
y set up in our hearts, be it what it may,
prive us of all power with God. He will
Do you provoke the Lord to jealousy?"
l say, "Put away every man his idols
fore mine eyes." If we indulge covet-
, gluttony, uncleanness, worldly con-
, deceit, intemperance, hatred, variance,
vil speaking, frivolity, or any other sin
hearts, we cannot have power with God.
d to us is, "Wash you, make you clean;
ay the evil of your doings; cease to do
rn to do well." One cherished sin, let

[illegible] form, suited to ou
stances, earnestly expressed, and dev
sented, but secret sin indulged prev
success.

Beloved, if we have power with God
have power *over self*. Energetic pr
bring the arm of God to bear on our cor
and subdue them; on our tempers, an
them; on our improper habits, and
conquer them. No power short of di
really conquer one sin, or effectually
one corruption of the heart. If we hav
with God, we shall have power *with me*
good men to influence them, with bad
benefit or silence them. Power wit
brings a secret energy into the soul, by
we conquer and accomplish [illegible]

ow many professors are deceived by him! ow many are led captive by him at his will! he head laid on Delilah's lap has been shorn its locks, and our Samsons are now, many of hem, the sport of the infernal Philistines. Satan has proved himself too powerful and too crafty for thousands of professors: he has induced them to settle down in a mere form of religion, or to indulge in some secret sin, or to substitute external services for the internal experience of the power of God's truth; and they have no power with God. Nothing will conquer Satan, but power gained from God. He cares for no foot, but that which crushed his head on Golgotha. Nor can we ever conquer self, succeed in our efforts to do lasting good to men, or overcome Satan who overcomes such millions, but as we have power with God. Oh, Holy Spirit, the Spirit of power, break us down before God; set our hearts against *all* sin; give us faith in God; indulge us with a vivid sense of our reconciliation to God; and enable us to pray with fervour;—that so we may have *power with God.*

"In themselves as weak as worms,
How can poor believers stand.
When temptations, foes, and storms,
Press them close on every hand!

Succour they of Rough ...
He who taught their hearts to pray,
Will not let them cry in vain.

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do—
Bring relief in deepest straits;
Prayer can force a passage through
Iron bars and brazen gates!

"For the wonders God has wrought,
Let us now our praises give;
And, by sweet experience taught,
Call upon him while we live."

IX.

CONSISTENT TEACHING.

"Teachest thou not thyself?"—Rom. ii. 21.

WE all need teaching; but, generally speaking, we love to teach rather than to be taught. We instruct others, but neglect ourselves. This is true of preachers and Sabbath-school teachers especially, and the language of Paul may be addressed to many of us, "*Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?*" Let us endeavour for once to be impartial, and look at this point closely, soberly, and seriously.

Thou teachest others *to be temperate*, but indulgest thyself far beyond what nature requires. A variety of dishes must be provided, glass after glass is taken, and, if positive intoxication is avoided, conscience has learned to be silent, and all passes off as well. If two invitations are given—one *to plain, homely fare, where the spare time will be taken up in prayer and praise, or godly conversation*; and another to a

... the same myself. Others
to make sacrifices, to work for
that they may give—to give ever
poverty; but the teacher is paid f
and gives little or nothing. N
does he take without some remu
a sacrifice does he make, not a p
overtax. He talks freely, urges w
trates eloquently, argues fervently
ranked among some whom our Lo
"*They say, and do not.*" Reader!
like you? "*Teachest thou not thys*

Thou teachest others *to be hum*
humility thy characteristic? A pr

should be meek, I may be haughty. Others should submit, I may resent. Others should forbear, I may avenge myself." Or, "Do as I say, not as I do." Can this be right? How must it appear in the eyes of God? Preacher, teacher, professor, art thou proud? Is there the proud look?—the haughty manner?—the contemptuous sneer?—the cold, distant, self-important bearing? Can this be approved of God? Will this pass the scrutiny of the Most High? Will the Holy Spirit fill thy heart, or consecrate thy body as his temple? Is it any wonder that you meet with no success? "*Teachest thou not thyself?*"

Thou teachest *activity for God* and immortal souls; but the pipe, the parlour, the light volume, or some scientific pursuit, occupies thy time and attention. Others should go out into the streets and lanes of the city, and into the highways and hedges; others should visit the sick, relieve the poor, warn the rebellious, expostulate with the backslider, and carry the gospel to every creature; but you have not the tact, the talent, the time—in one word, *you have not the disposition.* If you *would*, there is very much that you *could* do. Indeed, none of us know what we can do until we try. The slothful man saith, "There is a lion without,

Thou teachest, it may be, *close walkin*
God; but, like Peter, followest afar off t
What! is it good for others to get near t
to live as under his eye, to speak alw
within his hearing, and to endeavour t
mend themselves to him in well-doing, a
a faithful Creator; and can it be well fo
to live at a distance, to forget his prese
speak as if he heard thee not, and to w
though he regarded not thy conduct?
talk of close walking who know but little
it. They are seldom closeted with God.
realize but little of his presence. They r
but few communications from him. Th
but seldom thirsting for his presence.
the frivolous conversation, the worldly

ces; but are they prized by thee? Do quent the prayer-meeting and the weekly ; or will a little weariness, a short e, or a slight indisposition, satisfy thy ence as furnishing a sufficient reason for bsence? If gospel ordinances are import- let them be treated with respect, and be served with punctuality. Have you been ptized on a profession of your faith? Why not? Do you regularly attend at the Lord's table? Is your place in the sanctuary regularly occupied? If ordinances are means of grace, do you not need grace? If you need grace, ought you not regularly to use the means through which grace is communicated. If you do not regularly use the means, is it not evident that you do not desire the grace you need? If you teach at all, you should teach the value and importance of gospel ordinances; but if you do so teach, you ought to be very careful to corroborate by your conduct what you teach with your tongue. "*Teachest thou not thyself?*"

Thou teachest that a man should be *prepared for death*, or *stand ready for the coming of his Lord.* But are you prepared to die? Are you ready, if the Bridegroom should come? Are you watching, waiting, and working? Do you live *above* the world, distinct *from* the world,

hopes and affections are there? the loving bride, who sighs, desi for the return of her beloved brid you looking for that blessed h glorious appearing of the great Go Jesus Christ; or are you living pleased *with* the world, scraping yellow dust *of* the world, and feeli est reluctance to *leave* the world? news of the Lord's coming to-day, s be unpleasant to you? Search, lo me to ask, "*Teachest thou not thyse*

My dear brethren, this subject most solemn and serious considera that is *seen* by ourselves, and *sa* demands that we should pay att

How ...

g our appetites, in costly apparel, in ex-
ve journeys, and unnecessary furniture?
can we reprove others for inactivity, if we
ull, lifeless, and dronish? How can we
others to liberality, if we are close-fisted,
ous, and lovers of filthy lucre ourselves?
word, how can we reprove any sin, if we
ge in it—exhort to any duty, if we neglect
rge to the attainment of any excellence, if
isregard it—or be of much use, either to
orld or the Church, except we live up to
rofession? Holy Spirit, come down in all
ulness of thy power upon all our pastors,
hers, and teachers, and so sanctify, influ-
and transform us, that we may teach
is truth, and practise what we teach; that
ay profess what we believe, and conform
lives to our profession; for the dear Re-
er's sake!—Amen.

"Great God, who kills and makes alive,
To me the quickening power impart;
Thy grace restore, thy work revive,
Retouch my lips, renew my heart;
Forthwith a fresh commission send,
And all thy servant's steps attend.

"I would the precious time redeem,
And longer live for this alone,
To spend, and to be spent for them
Who have not yet my Saviour known;

into thy [illegible]
And let me live to preach thy word,
And let me for thy glory live,
My every sacred moment spend
In publishing the sinner's Friend.

"Enlarge, enflame, and fill my heart,
With boundless charity divine;
So shall I all my strength exert,
And love them with a zeal like thine;
And lead them to thine open side—
The sheep for whom their Shepherd died."

X.

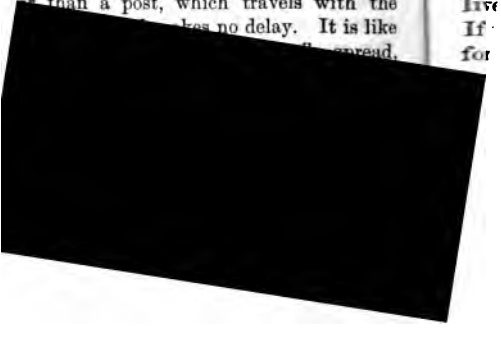
WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

"What is your life?"—JAMES iv. 14.

IF God ask a question, we should listen to it, think of it, and prepare an answer. Here the Lord puts a question to us; it refers to the brevity of our mortal existence: he asks each one of us, "What is your life?" We think much of it. We make great provision for it. We spend much *thought* upon it. We are very careful to preserve it. *But what is it?* Let us ponder this question. Let us give it the attention it deserves. It is especially suitable to us when shut up in our sick-chamber, when afflicted and tried with losses and crosses, or at the commencement of a new year. Our sufferings may be great, our trials may be many, but they must be short; for *what is our life?* Let us look—

At its duration. It is exceedingly brief. No *one figure can set* forth its brevity, or suffi-

ct our minds with it, and therefore
mployed. It is like a flower, which
under the influence of an Eastern
blossoms for an hour, and then fades
It is like a shadow, which lessens
ns, until in a few minutes it is gone.
ke the shuttle which flies from the
hand, and passes before the eyes so
that one can but just see it and say,
no." It is like the wind which rushes
we hear it, we feel it, and it is no more.
ke the dried leaf, or the thistle down,
is made the sport of the breeze, and soon
d out of sight. In one passage in the
of Job we have figures taken from three
nts to represent its rapid flight. It is
than a post, which travels with the
kes no delay. It is like
spread,



they have passed away! and every year appears to pass more quickly than the last. What is it in *comparison?* What are your thirty, or forty, or even seventy years, if compared with the age of the antediluvian patriarchs—Methuselah, for instance. But what are they in comparison with eternity? Think of endless duration, of interminable ages! and while you think of them, ask, "What is my life?" Ah, what? No comparison can be drawn, but the thought may be improved. May the Lord help us to improve it.

This naturally leads us to inquire—

What is its design? Why was life given us? Why is it continued to us? It has reference to three parties. First, *to ourselves;* and the design is to prepare us for eternity. We must live for ever; but *how* depends upon the present. If we live in sin here, we must live in suffering for ever. If time is spent in folly, eternity will be spent in bitter, unavailing remorse and sorrow. If we believe in Jesus, exercise repentance toward God, are renewed in the spirit of our minds, and devote our lives to God's service, then eternity will to us be an endless existence in pleasure, satisfaction, and unspeakable delight. In reference *to God*; the design of our life *is to glorify* him, which we can only do by *believing his* promises, embracing his Son, ob-

for God, and then in eternity we
with God. Here we should aim in all
honour God, and then in eternity God
ur us. In reference *to our fellow-men;*
l of our life is to benefit and do them
o one is created for himself. Each
and to his fellow, and every one should
nefit the whole. We should serve our
on by the will of God. And life is
ied, it is squandered, it is wasted in
we do not use it to secure our eternal
n, to promote God's glory, and to ad-
he holiness and happiness of our fellow-

t is its character? Looking at its *natural*
it is a gift conferred upon us by our
if rightly

kindness and tender mercies, and has pointed out the way by which we may obtain everlasting blessedness. But let us look at its *moral* character. What is our life in reference *to others?* Is it exemplary? Is it convincing? Is it useful? Is it likely to make a good impression? What is our life in reference *to ourselves?* Is it holy, or profane? Is it godly, or ungodly? Is it becoming an immortal being, one who *must* live for ever? This view of the subject is not sufficiently attended to by many. Is it by us?

What is the importance of our life? Ah, who shall say? Who can describe, what language can set forth, the importance of our present life? It is the bud of being; the flower will not open on this side the grave. It is the youth of existence; we shall not be full-grown in this world. It is the seed-time of eternity; what is sown now will be reaped in a changeless state. It is the introduction to immortality. What, then, is its importance? Ask the dying sinner, whose eyes are just opened, whose soul is just awakened to the solemnities of the eternal world. What reply will he give? Look at his death-struck countenance, mark the expression of his *half-glazed* eye, hear the accents of his *tremulous voice;* but he fails, he tries in vain

—— ~ ——, and I am not sa
importance of life I cannot describe;
of time I can never declare." As
soul—the soul which, like the rich
up its eyes in hell, being in torments.
now rules over the immortal spirit.
beyond description, torture the never-
tellect. What is its estimate of the ir
of life? But it would require a new
to describe, unearthly figures to illust
a voice such as we have never hea
forth its estimate of the precious gift.
the depths of hell, or in the highest
is the value of life really known. The

own souls. They live as if existence w
bounded by time, and all beyond were an
hilation. Is it folly? How many live foo
They provide for the body, but they neglect
soul; they live for time, but they lose sight
eternity. The accepted time passes away u
heeded. The day of salvation is spent in s
They only lay a foundation for everlasting s
condemnation, and open in their own heart
source of never-ceasing agony. Believer! wi

declde, and [illegible]
tion at once, and so shall we be saved to

"Life is real! life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
'Dust thou art, to dust returnest,'
Was not spoken of the soul.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footsteps on the sands of time;

"Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother
Seeing shall take heart again.

[illegible] and doing,

XI.

WHY WAS I BORN?

THIS is a simple question, and yet, perhaps, some have never proposed it to themselves; or, if they have, they have not sought for a satisfactory answer. We cannot think that we were born merely to eat, drink, work, laugh, suffer pain, and die. God created us for a noble end; we were born for important purposes. Let us notice a few things for which we were born.

and seeks, may know what is God's will. We were born to learn and do God's will.

Thirdly, *To seek God's blessing.*—His blessing is the source of wealth and happiness. We cannot be happy except God bless us; and we have no right to expect God's blessing except we seek for it. He blesses all who forsake sin rely on the sacrifice of his Son, and seek face by prayer. We were born that we know God, seek the blessing of God, will of God, and receive happiness fro

Fourthly, *To enjoy God's favour.* is the life of the soul. It is the every intelligent creature. The hat we can possess or enjoy is

... we are capable
and the means of doing so are presente
in the Word of God, the means of gra
the person and work of the Lord Jesus C

Fifthly, *To dwell in God's presence.*—
always with us, though often unperceiv
us. He fills the world we inhabit, and we
to realize, wherever we are, God is here;
ever we do, God sees me; whatever we
God hears me; whatever we think, God r
my thoughts. Our one design therefore sh
be, to please God; and our one aim, to comm
ourselves to him. If we dwell in God's prese
on earth, we shall do so in heaven. He t
walks with wise men will be wise; and he t
walks with God will be God-like. If Goc
our friend and companion n—
shall shar

to all eternity; but will you? God must be glorified in you; shall it be in your salvation or damnation—in your songs or your sighs—in your joys or your torments—in your hallelujahs or your endless wailings? Think. Decide. Pray. Let your life declare.

"O Lord, do thou the sinner turn!
Now rouse him from his senseless state;
Oh, let him not thy counsel spurn,
Nor rue his fatal choice too late!"

XII.

WHAT IS MY BUSINESS?

THIS is a question of importance. It requires consideration. It deserves an answer. Unless we know our business, we cannot attend to it; and unless we attend to our proper business, we cannot gain a good character. Certainly we were not intended to live in idleness. We were created for activity. We are placed in the world to *get* good and *do* good. What, then, is my proper business as—

A man? It is to ascertain God's will, and do it; to learn what will glorify God, and aim at it; to live as in God's sight; to work for God's honour; to seek God's company; to reverence God's majesty; and to prefer God's will to everything beside. It is my business to serve my generation, to try and benefit all around me, and to prove that I do not love any one *less* than I love myself. In one word, to do *all the good I* can, and *prevent* all the evil that

consider this their business, and t
do, often lose sight of it. We have
and in so doing have *come short* of
God. What, then, is my proper bu
A sinner? It is to confess my
and seek pardon from God. Reco
God, acceptance with God, and r
the image of God, should daily
thoughts, engage our minds, and l
our pursuits. Our business is, to a
man can be just with God, and
privilege; how man can enjoy pea
and enjoy that blessing; how man
for the presence and service of
prepared for the same. Our busin
is neglected or unfinished until w

the free and sovereign grace of God, which has distinguished me from so many around me. *All* are sinners. Only a *few* become saints. And all saints do not learn and follow their proper business as they should. What should a saint do? He should carefully copy the example of his Saviour; for Jesus has said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done." His example is bright, beautiful, and perfect. It is just what God requires, and what the saint in his best moments desires to be. He should go about doing good. He should sympathize with human misery in every form and wherever discovered. He should aim to spread the knowledge of Christ, and endeavour to make every one happy by leading him to Christ. Every talent should be employed; every opportunity for doing good, even upon the smallest scale, should be embraced. It is our business to "teach every one his neighbour, and every one his brother, saying, Know the Lord;"—to oppose sin, to banish ignorance, to relieve indigence, and to endeavour to introduce happiness into every circle and every place. Every morning we should ask, Can I do good *to* any one to-day? Can I make any one happy? Can I *spread the* knowledge of Jesus? Can I *lead a soul to God*? Shall I not try? Ought

... *to eternity?* It is
the end in view,—to live as
give an account, and who may
soon, very suddenly, to do so.
is to *keep short accounts*, puttin
until to-morrow which I can do
daily getting my sins blotted ou
cious blood of Jesus. Never let
at night with guilt on my consci
the guilt of to-day into the bu
morrow. I ought to keep my l
lamp clean, my vessel full of oil,
bright, and my affairs all in read
sudden coming of the Lord. D
found quite work enough for the l
out leaving anything to finish th
therefore "

comes, he may say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"The last loud trumpet's wondrous sound
Shall wake the nations underground:
Where, then, my God, shall I be found,
When all shall stand before thy throne,
When thou shalt make their sentence known,
And all thy righteous judgment own?

"Thou, who for sinners felt such pain,
Whose precious blood the cross did stain,
Who did for us its curse sustain,
By all that man's redemption cost,
Let not my trembling soul be lost,
In storms of guilty terror tossed.

"Give me in that dread day a place
Among thy chosen, faithful race,
The sons of God and heirs of grace:
Trembling, before thy throne I bend;
My God, my Father, and my Friend,
Do not forsake me in the end."

WE are all living for some end, either right or wrong; and the end for which we live is decided by the course we pursue. If we live in the gratification of our passions, in the practice of sin, and indulging vicious propensities, we are only living to dishonour God, degrade our natures, and eternally ruin our souls. Many men never ask, What should I have in view of my conduct? They live in a careless, thoughtless, indifferent state. One would think that the only end of life with them was to eat, drink, work, take a little carnal pleasure, and die. They seem seldom to raise their thoughts higher. They lose sight of the capabilities of their nature. They never reflect on the holiness and glory of God. They drive from their all thoughts of eternity. They satisfy themselves with the idea, "I daresay I shall

they indulge the vague hope, that because God is merciful, therefore all will be well with them at last; whereas, nothing can be more fallacious. No course of conduct can display greater folly.

Reader! what have you been living for? Do you know? Have you been living as an immortal, intelligent being, or like the beasts that perish? Have you ever steadily fixed your eye on eternity, and asked, with due seriousness, What shall I be when time is no more? What will be my employment in another world? If not, it is quite time that you did. You must live whether you will or not. You have no choice as to existence. You are destined *to live for ever.* Your soul can never die. Is it not a serious thought, "I must exist, I must live, for ever?" Will you not dwell upon it, and ask, Where shall I exist? In what state shall I be? In what company shall I dwell? How will God treat me? What will angels and my fellow-men think of men? Oh, if you should be fixed in a state of unchangeable woe! If you should be doomed to dwell with devils and lost souls for ever! If you should, at death, be plunged into black despair, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth! *But if you are, it will be your own fault.* Just

Christ.

If you, then, should perish, will you not richly deserve it? Can you blame any one but yourself? You have a Bible, or you may have one if you will. You hear the gospel, or you can hear it if you please. In the gospel the gate of life is set wide open, and any one may enter it; the road to glory is plainly marked out, and you are invited to walk in it; the way to hell is clearly set forth, and you are warned to forsake it, and go in the way everlasting. What, then, are you living for? What end do you propose to yourself in your daily walk? What do you aim at? If you wrong your ov soul by losing sight of its best interests,—if perish in your sins by neglecting the salvation,—if you are condemned at ' rejecting the Lord Jesus, whom can yo' What excuse can you make? How bear your own *bitter* reflections, or e

endless lashings of an honest but guilty conscience? My dear friend, do listen to one who wishes you well; to one who desires to see you happy in this world, and happy in that which is to come: do reflect upon the life you are living, the course you are pursuing, and the end you are likely to make. To *you* a Saviour is made known; to *you* his invitation is given; for *you* his blood will avail; by *you* all the blessings of salvation may be enjoyed; and on *you* endless glory may yet be conferred. And you *must* be either happy beyond description, as the result of receiving Christ; or be miserable beyond conception, as the consequence of rejecting him! There is no alternative, one or the ther *it must be.*

"Christ is the only way to God,
No other path we need:
The voice of pardon, through his blood,
Brings heavenly news indeed!

"Come, all who feel yourselves undone,
To this great Sacrifice;
Come, rest your souls on Christ alone,
He'll bear you to the skies.

"This is the way from death and hell,
The way to heaven and God;
The soul that trusts him here shall dwell
In his divine abode."

NOTHING is so powerf
it can only influenc
faith. However much
love me, it would hav
except I believe it. Just so it is
They read of the love of Jesus,
that love, but it does not affect th
cause they do not believe that it app
The love of Jesus is the most wond
known in the universe; and yet it
fluence upon thousands, because
believe it. The apostle John coul
have known and believed the lov
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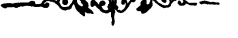
suppose the working classes did really
hat the Lord Jesus Christ loved them;
realized their misery and read their
nd in order to save them therefrom,
ir nature, and died in their stead—must
owerfully affect them? Would they not
him with reverence, think of him with
e, trust in him with confidence, speak
vith feeling, and obey him with cheer-
Surely they would. If, therefore,
not affected with the love of Christ, it
se they do not believe it. How import-
n, is faith! And if Jesus loves us, if
us so in his Word, and if he has proved
ing in our stead, must it not grieve him
e refuse to believe the love which he
as? Without faith it is impossible to
im: for until we believe him, we treat
f his word were not worthy of credit; or,
ne apostle's strong language, we "*make*
r."
er! if Jesus had no love for you, would
his servants to warn you, and his
s to assure you? And if he has thus
is love, ought you not to believe it?
ou do not, are you not guilty of a great
—a crime for which you can find no ex-
d for which you can never answer at

ss of his word—have I no
e happy? Suppose my fellow-sinners
e—suppose they persecute me—suppose they
neer at me—suppose they affect to pity me—
what then? If the King of kings loves me—if
the Son of God manifests himself to me—all
must be well; and he says, "I love them that
love me." The love of Jesus is like the bow in
the cloud in the day of storms—it assures me of
safety; it is like the flowing fountain in the
dreary desert—it assures me of supply; it is like
the bright sun in a dark world—it enlightens,
enlivens, and warms me; it is like the harmony
of heaven, brought to cheer the solitu
gloom of earth. Love of Jesus! fill my
occupy my thoughts, feast my intellect, i
my zeal, animate my hopes, brighten n

"To him approach with fervent prayer,
And if you perish, perish there,
Resolved at Jesus' feet to lie,
Suing for mercy, till you die

"Doubt not, but venture near his throne,
And make your supplications known;
Tell him the cause of all your grief,
And he will grant you quick relief.

"Thrice happy souls, who thus address
The God of love and boundless grace!
Jesus will such completely save,
And life eternal they shall have."



THE weaver's trade is an important. It employs of hands, and adds comfort. Weavers are useful and valuable class of men crease the wealth of the nation, prosperity. They ought to be their welfare, both spiritual should be sought. Let us, there words to weavers. Come, brot and for five minutes hear what

Life is short. Time soon flies away. We are hasting to an unseen and unchangeable state. Time is given us to prepare for eternity. Life in this world is only introductory to life in another. How many *weavers* die every year! How many die without hope! They live thoughtless lives. If they have plenty of work, good wages, and jolly companions, they care for nothing more. They are careless about their souls, they trifle with eternity. This betrays the greatest folly. They ought to "seek first the kingdom of God"—they should "strive to enter in at the strait gate,"—they should "lay up for themselves treasures in heaven." Time flies like the shuttle; the last month, the last week, the last day, the last hour, the last minute, will soon come; and "after this the judgment." "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." But it will soon be said to every one of us, *to you*, "There shall be time no longer." As time leaves us, eternity finds us. Oh, then, every time you look of the shuttle, think of the brevity of life, of the rapidity of time!

The swiftness of the shuttle pres-

times and be diligently employed. rest for one day, while there is an our own personal salvation, but "le enter into gospel rest." Let us " *gence* to make our calling and el Let us rather make assurance doul be satisfied with insufficient evi having made our own salvation su active, and never lie down to me while there is an unconverted w town, in the country, in Great I the world. Up, brother weaver yourselves men! Work while it day; for "*the night cometh*, when work."

The shuttle preaches *energy*, ene

mightily" (Col. i. 29). Weavers should be men of energy, and so should Christians. The times require energetic men. The church calls for energetic men. The world will only be moved by men of energy. Ye godly weavers, go forth among your fellows. Speak for Christ. Set your hearts upon winning their souls for the Saviour. By kindness and gentleness, by activity and energy, by perseverance and prayer, by benevolence and generosity, strive to bring them to the Saviour. And as a stimulus often read over the apostle's words: "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way *shall save a soul from death*, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

My friend, are you a thoughtless weaver? Let me beg of you for once to think, to think seriously for a few moments. If you persevere in your present course you *will* perish, you *must* be lost; but you *may* be saved. No power under heaven can hinder your being saved. No one can ruin you but yourself. Only take *the right direction*, and persevere in the good old way, and you, a poor weaver, shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of your heavenly Father. You shall exchange the loom for a harp *of gold; the* workshop for a mansion; the *dirty streets of the* manufacturing town for the

while there is an unconverted weaver in the town, in the country, in Great Britain, or in the world. Up, brother weavers, and show yourselves men! Work while it is called to-day; for "*the night cometh*, when no man can work."

The shuttle preaches *energy*, energetic action, —just such as the Saviour recommends for ourselves: "*Agonize* to enter in at the strait gate." Put forth all your strength, throw all your energy into it. Wrestle with God. Resist Satan. Strive against the spirit, maxims, customs of the world. "Lay hold on life." Just such, too, as the apostle for others: "Whereunto I also la... according to his working, which



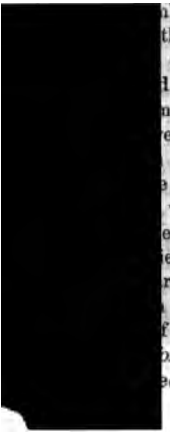
energetic men. The Christian
energetic men. The church
moved by men of energy. The world will o
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ler heaven can hinder
one can ruin

village of Thurleigh, in Bedfo
usual, soon strolled into the chu
thing particular struck my min
felt, as I often do in such place
spread over my spirit. I wall
long, rank grass, and read an i
and there; at length I was s
number of stones bearing the sar
Each family seemed to have cla
piece, and each appeared dete
petuate its name. But as I w
corner of the yard, I saw a nu
but not one word was legible c
I tried, but could not deciphe
had erased the whole. Well
affection placed these stones

but, with this exception, the name was no more remembered in the village. The family had died out, or had emigrated to some other place, or were sunk into poverty.

Well, thought I, here is a lesson-book, and here are lessons to be learned. Let us be kind and attentive to our relatives while we have them: many, it is to be feared, who fail to perform their duty to their friends while they live, try to make up for this neglect by erecting a grave-stone for them when they are dead. The good that we do to the living will be remembered; but such acts for the dead will pass into oblivion. Let kindness carve our names on the hearts of the living, and they will carry the inscription beyond the bounds of this earth and the limits of time. Acts of kindness shown to God's saints are recorded in heaven, and the record will endure through eternal ages. We are always engaged in erecting monuments, either to our honour or disgrace. Every poor Christian that you relieve, every sorrowful soul that you comfort, every widow whose wants you supply, every orphan child whose tears you dry, will become a living monument, having inscribed upon it your good deeds; and there they will be read for ever. You need not keep a record of them; such works will follow you, and will be mem-



nbered in the next
thren, let us not trouble about a grave-
or be anxious to have our names en-
l on perishable materials, in characters
nay be erased; but let it be our concern
e our names written in heaven. If writ-
the Lamb's book of life, if registered
e finger of God as born from above, the
will remain for ever. There are no
es there. No destructive elements, no
evous beings, can ever affect them there:
re more durable than the deepest sculp-
the most lasting material; more durable
f written with an iron pen in lead, in the
or ever. Let us, then, make our calling
ection sure. Let us never be satisfied

until we obtain satisfactory evidence that our names are written on the heart of Jesus, and sculptured on his hands. And if we carry about with us this assurance, we may smile upon the attempts of our foes to mar our fair fame, or cast dishonour on our names; for we know that our God will bring us forth to the light, and we shall behold his righteousness. Let us imitate the conduct of Him who, though rich by nature, honourable by descent, spotless in character, and whose life was crowded with deeds of mercy and of might, lay in a borrowed grave, and never had a tomb-stone. But though he had no sculptured stone to mark the place of his burial, he had what was infinitely better—he had his name engraved on myriads of human hearts, his praises sounded by all the hosts of angelic tongues, and the highest seat in glory awarded him by his righteous and delighted Father. Like him, let us go about doing good. Like him, let us minister to the poor, the sick, and the broken-hearted. Like him, let us be known as the poor man's friend, the brother born for adversity. Like him, let us spend our health, our strength, our wealth, and every talent, to glorify God and do sinners good. Then, *though* persecuted by bitter foes, though mis-

is on high."

Let us, then, make it our daily ca
what is worth recording, and leave the
ing of it to others. Let us aim to have
in God's book, a name among God's sai
a name in God's world, for aiming at h
walking by his Word, and endeavouri
the greatest amount of good to his c
In our grave-yards we often read what
what is erroneous, and what is false; l
live for God's glory and the good of o
men—if we live with eternity before
love of Christ in our hearts—if we liv
that must give an account, and whos
"to do it with joy and not with g
shall have an inscription that is wi

inscription which

monument, deeply engrave on it thy love; my life reflect the glory of thy grace, and be ose copy of thine own; let my death bring our to thy cause, and my endless employ- t be praising thy name! Blessed be God good hope through grace, and the prospect glorious immortality.

"Encourage my heart with thy smile,
My ever unchangeable Friend;
Each season of darkness beguile,
And let me exult in the end.

"'Tis better to suffer and die
Beneath thy compassionate rod,
Than feel my enjoyments run high,
But never have thee for my God.

"I would not contend with thy will,
Whatever that will may decree;
But oh, may each trial I feel
Unite me more firmly to thee!"

GREAT and sore troubles preceded the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and great and sore troubles will precede the second coming of our beloved Lord. The time of his coming approaches, and it becomes his disciples to think of that event, and diligently prepare for it. But if we do not witness the descent of our Lord in the clouds, death will soon come and usher us into his presence; and before that we may be exposed to many and painful troubles, so that the direction given by our Lord to his disciples may be just suitable, "*Then look u*
(Luke xxi. 28). We are entering upon a year: we shall have new toils, new trial
temptations, and new troubles; but they come let us "*look up.*" And, w
to encourage our souls to do so, let
opening of the year, consider,—

t, *The seasons* to which this advice is
able. There may be national calamities,
stilence, famine, or war; but whatever
upon the nation, the Christians in it
"*look up.*" There may be persecution;
ts may lose their places, mechanics their
yment, labourers their situations, cottagers
cottages, and children many of their com-
for Christ's and conscience' sake; while
vord of the magistrate is sheathed, the
the tongue, the frowning countenance,
utes some; the withholding employment
tom persecutes others: but if persecution

windows, and take away the desir
with a stroke; if our parents sh
children be removed, or our wives
be laid in the grave; though love
be removed far from us, and our
into darkness, still, whatever deat
us determine that we will "*look u*
ness becloud our evidences, obsc
and throw its gloom over our m
couragement brood over our so
stumbling-blocks in our way; if
experience appear questionable, a
ance with God at present doubtf

follow our Lord's loving advice, and "*look up.*" We will now notice,—

Secondly, *The direction* our Saviour gives—"*Then look up.*" Look not back, as Lot's wife did. Look not within, as too many do. Look not around, as David did. But "*look up.*" Look up to God; he is your Father, your Friend, your Saviour. He *can* help you. He *will* help you. He says, "Look unto me, and be delivered; for I am God." Many did so of old, as David testifies,—"They looked unto him, and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed." Look up for light to guide you, and the everlasting light will shine upon you. Look up for grace to sanctify you, and the grace of Jesus will be found sufficient for you. Look up for strength to enable you to do and suffer God's will, and his strength will be made perfect in your weakness. Look up for comfort to cheer you, and as one whom his mother comforteth, so will the Lord comfort you. Look up for courage to embolden you, and the Lord will give courage to the faint, and to them that have no might he will increase strength. Look up for patience to keep you, and the God of patience and *consolation* will enable you quietly *to bear the heaviest* burden, and silently to *endure the most* painful affliction. Look up

word of a faithful God. Look up in pra
asking for what God has graciously promi
Look up in hope, expecting what you as
the name of Jesus. Look up with adora
and adore the sovereignty, righteousness,
wisdom of God; thus honour God and he
honour you. Look up constantly, let not
daunt or discourage you; rather say, "Be
as the eyes of servants look unto the han
their master, and as the eyes of a maiden
the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait
the Lord our God, *until that he have mercy*
us." Look up, for this will keep the head
swimming, the heart from sinking, the h

you will never regret it. Act upon it, and you will never repent of it. It is impossible to say what will happen to us, or what will be required of us this year; but this direction, if properly attended to, will procure for us all that we need, secure us against all that we dread, or make us more than a match for all our foes and fears. Fellow-Christian, are you fearful? "*look up*," and hear Jesus saying to you, "Fear not; I will help thee." Are you discouraged? "*look up*," and your youth shall be renewed like the eagle's, and fresh light, comfort, and courage shall be given you. Are you desponding? "*look up*," for Jesus never breaks the bruised reed, nor quenches the smoking flax. Don't look too much at sin; look at the infinitely meritorious blood of God's dear Son: don't look too much at self; but look at Jesus, who ever lives to make intercession for you in heaven. Are you stripped of your comforts, your props, and your goods? "*then look up.*" He who stripped you, loves you; he will be more than all these to you; he will bind up your broken heart, calm your perturbed spirit, cheer your drooping mind, and fill you with his own peace and happiness. Look up *for* all you want—*from* all *you fear*—*through* all that would obstruct *your way*—and *notwithstanding* all that would

... lift up mine eyes unto the
cometh my help: my help
Lord, who made heaven and e
at sin, it will discourage you;
it will distress you; look not
bewilder you; look not to
deceive you; look not to mes
appoint you; look not at trials
you; but do as the Church
"until the Lord look down f
heaven" (Lam. iii. 50). I
always, look intently, to Jesus
work looking, fight looking, su
looking, and die looking, to

"Look to him till his dying love
Thy every thought control;
Its vast constraining influence prove
O'er body, spirit, soul

"Look to him, as the race you run,
Your never failing Friend;
Finish he will the work begun,
And grace in glory end."



desert, when death was sweeping away from the earth the rebellious generation which came out of Egypt; and when God, to a great extent, kept at a distance from them. And so may we, under our present depressing, discouraging circumstances, as the visible Church of Christ. God has covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud, and he has covered himself with a cloud, so that our prayers will not pass through. We sigh and cry, but he seems to shut out our prayer; we mourn his absence, but he does not favour us with his presence as we desire and wish to enjoy it. The prayer of Moses is ours; yes, beloved, we are crying out, "Return, O Lord, how long?"

What is the cause of this exclamation? Why *we thus* pray? Because we are not favoured

were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost." Grace, in our experience, his doctrine dropped as the rain, and his communications distilled as the dew. We sat under his shadow with delight, and his fruit was sweet unto our taste. But where are those joys now? When do we enjoy such precious seasons? Where are the people that are in such a case? Alas! generally speaking, we are cold, hard, lifeless, and unspiritual; therefore we may well cry, "Return, O Lord, how long?" Again, the sanctifying influences of the blessed Spirit do not attend the word as they once did. Time was when the preacher could say to his people, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." By the ordinances, the Lord sanctified his people. The covetous became liberal—the proud became humble—the idle became industrious—the self-indulgent learned to *practise* self-denial—the earthly-*minded became* spiritual, a gradual, progres-

were, which makes us exclaim, "How lo
Lord, how long?" Once more, the sa
operations of the quickening Spirit are v
held. Once sinners were converted by t
sands: great multitudes both of the Jews
also of the Greeks believed. The hand of
Lord was with his servants, and multitu
were turned unto the Lord. The Lord ad
to the Church *daily* such as should be sa
The gospel was accompanied with an invinc
power, and the hearers were born again
the word of truth. The gospel came no
word only, but in demonstration of the Sp
and of power. Now how few are really c
verted to God; and even in the converted l
slight the work appears! Once the soul

all will not do—things remain just as they were. We can be satisfied with nothing less than the presence of God. We value the servants, but we want the Master. We prize the instruments, but we long for the Divine Agent. We have the wells, but we want the living, the life-giving water. And all will go to decay except the Lord return. In many places our churches decrease, our congregations dwindle, our pastors are dispirited, and dull discontent pervades all the living in our Jerusalem. These things make us cry, and cry with painful earnestness, "Return, O Lord, how long?"

But what answer may we suppose that the Lord will give to many of us? Perhaps he may say, that he will not return as we desire, until we separate from the world as he has bidden us. His word is, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." But, like Ephraim of old, we have mixed ourselves among the people. Politics, speculations, carnal associations, and a worldly mind, have led us astray; so that there is but very little difference between us and those who know not God. He requires us to stand out in bold relief from the world; to be distinct and distinguishable; to be like a *city set* upon a hill, which cannot *be hid.* While professors have balls, dances,

tion. We are called with a heavenly
We are called to glory and virtue. C
tion or calling is to publish and preser
truth; to represent and set forth t
nature of Christ's holy religion; to en
to pluck sinners as brands from the l
and lead them on to glory, honour, imm
and eternal life; to live for God; to l
Jesus; to aim at the honour of God in
thing we do; to live as saints, or ur
persons, who are born from above, buri
Christ, risen with Christ, ascended with
and identified with Christ—the temple
Holy Ghost—the companions of God the
and of his Son Jesus Christ, with wh
profess to live in close, constant, and

there plead until we prevail. Like Hezekiah we must turn our faces to the wall, and pray until God yield to us. Like the disciples at Emmaus we must constrain him to turn in and abide with us. Brethren, let us remember that the energetic prayer of the righteous man availeth much; that God will attend to his own elect when they cry day and night unto him, though he may seem to hold out long. Let us, therefore, stir up ourselves to take hold on him, and give him no rest until he bow the heavens and come down, and work wonders in our midst.

Do we *feel* this to be our state? Is God at a distance from us? Are the ordinances comparatively barren? Is the gospel almost without effect? Are our churches and ministers at a loss to know what to do? Do we pant and long for a change? Is this the rooted, reigning, abiding desire of our souls? Can we be satisfied with no less? Are we becoming impatient and passionately crying out, "Return, O Lord, how long?" Or can we be still, silent, and comparatively indifferent under such a state of things? Brethren, the Spirit of God is grieved, and *we* have grieved him! Our heavenly *Father's* heart is wounded, and *we have wounded it!* Our adorable Saviour has

you? Do we act under the circ
we ought to act? Do *you?* God
considered the author or the ca
things, therefore he demands of
Spirit of the Lord straitened?
doings? Do not my words do g
that walketh uprightly?" Can w
uprightly then? Impossible, or (
withhold his presence from us!
word: "The Lord God is a sun
the Lord will give grace and g
thing will be withheld from them
rightly."

"Your Father also is merciful."—LUKE vi. 36.

JESUS revealed Jehovah as a Father He constantly kept this idea before the minds of his disciples. He turned their thoughts from his greatness to his goodness. He taught them to realize that he was *their* Father. They were to pray to him as such; to trust in him as such; to love him as such; to obey him as such. He was here setting forth his moral excellences for their imitation. He commands them to be merciful, as their Father also is merciful. There is something very precious in this representation of the Most High. He is our Father. As such, he is not only great, glorious, omnipotent, and just, but he is merciful; naturally, infinitely, eternally merciful. He is merciful to all, but more especially to his children; yea, he delighteth to manifest his *mercy to them*. He is merciful this day, and

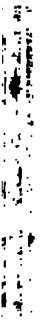
sympathize with us. Our suffer
him. They will touch his hea
awaken his tenderest sympath
not suffer alone. He will come
sustain us. He will administe
sities. He will even make our
ness. His sympathy will effect
Others may pity, he will relieve
speak, he will apply. Others
well, he will really do us good
by-and-by be said, as it was o
"In all their afflictions he wa
our Father also merciful? Th
to us. Every sigh, every groa
prayer shall enter into his ears.
to the beating of the contrite he

and broken though they be. He cannot, for he is merciful. Is our Father also merciful? Then *he will pardon us.* He will pardon not only once or twice, but every time we confess our sins with sorrow, and plead for pardon in Jesus' name. How often we have to go and confess the same sins, and seek forgiveness of the same offences! Nor dare we promise, that if he forgive us now, we will be guilty of them no more; for if we did, corruption within us, and Satan without us, would soon lead us to commit them. Still our merciful Father forgives us, and will do so. How strange was the plea of Moses when seeking pardon for the rebellious Israelites: "Let the power of my Lord be great, as thou hast forgiven them from Egypt until now." "As far as the east is from the west, so far will he remove our transgressions from us." Hear his own gracious announcement: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." If our Father also is merciful, then *he will notice the least good thing in us.* He did so in Abijah, the child of Jeroboam, as it is written: "He only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found *some good thing* toward the *Lord God of* Israel." It may only be *the desire to labour* for him without the power;



—ne speaking a w
ever good there is in us, g
Spirit (and there is no go
blessed Spirit does produ
proves, commends, records,
may overlook it. We ma
Not so our merciful Father:
sight, and is highly esteem
different prejudiced man! O
virtues; for one spot, he overl
ties. Oh, to resemble our eve
in noticing and admiring wh
children! If our Father alsc
he will accept the —
child

evils. Rather, sanctified afflictions are amongst our choicest mercies, our most efficient teachers. David had many, sore, and long-continued afflictions; but were they evils? Oh, no, blessings; therefore he writes: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." And again: "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Solomon long since wrote, and Providence has ever since proved the truth of the saying, "There shall no evil happen to the just." We *have* been tried. We have been cast down. We have been stripped. We have been disappointed. We have been painfully humbled. Our *hearts have* often bled, for they have been



as love one another for we are
children. He pities every
He bids us love every one
sisters. It is his will that
other. It is our happiness
We cannot be like our Fath
all his children—if we do n
—if we do not love them
glowing love. Oh, for mo
people!

If God is our Father, ar
merciful, what a source of
us! We know not what a
not what we may have to

ful Father, let us *cherish the thought.* It
sweet. It is pleasant. It is profitable.
must do us good. How much better to think
our mercies than of our miseries; of our merci
ful Father than of our malicious foes! Let u
improve the privilege. Let us go to God as hi
children. Let us ask of him as of a Fathe
Let us credit his word, rely on his care, rejoic
in his mercy, wait at his footstool, work in hi
vineyard, trust in his faithfulness, and haste
home to be with him in glory everlasting fo
ever. Let us *honour the relationship.* Let
walk with God in holy fellowship, obey G
with ardent zeal, imitate God with care

livered with so much love wl
disciples on the mount: "
shine before men, that they
works, and glorify your Fa
heaven." Reader! is God
you feel a child's love to hi
cise filial confidence in him?
for counsel, for supplies, for
need? Do you look upon hi
strive to imitate this excelle
you merciful to your men
merciful to your fellow-men
you merciful to your servan

[redacted]

A So

"When all my
And pond
The further
I trace bu

"Soon as from
My race w
My spirit wi
And falsel

"To manhood
My reason
As custom, a
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"My conscienc
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The good whi
The evil I v


he be charged with a want of charity, or with defective orthodoxy. His s were clear, his heart was kind, and yet ys to some, "Ye enter not in yourselves, them that were entering in ye hindered." efers to his kingdom, his church: some affected, concerned, and thought of coming m, and joining with him; but "they were ered." Are any hindered now? Are there ur churches and congregations, those that er souls from coming to Christ, or joining his people? We fear there are, and in y department of the church. Let us look,— rst, *At the pulpit.*—What do we see there? ps, the preacher is cold in his manner.

and early attendance, by their bland and pleasant manners, by their constant activity and attention to all who attend the place, that they desire the conversion of souls, and the increase of the church? Are they first at the prayer-meetings, first at the public services, making it evident that *their hearts are set* upon the prosperity of the cause? If not, they will hinder some. Next to the preacher, people look to the deacons to be grave, temperate, devout, active, and thoroughly devoted to God. But when deacons are worldly-minded, proud, lordly, cold, distant, and patronizers of worldly amusements and carnal pleasures, it must be said of them, "*Those that* were entering in ye hindered."

rayer-meetings, church-[illegible]
he sick; can it be any wonder if the church
o which such deacons belong dwindle, declin
become worldly, formal, and inactive? Let
look,—

Thirdly, *At the members of our churches.*
And what meets us here? Here is one w
known for his love of money and hard dealin
there is another who habitually gives way
his unholy temper; there is another who p
tises deception in business, because it is
custom of the trade; there is another wh
never seen at the prayer-meeting; the
another so much like the world, that if w
not see him at the Lord's table we never
think that he made any profession of reli
[illegible] cold as marble, to

been holy times, praying times, acting
Ours are talking times, giving times,
omething more is wanting. We have
of undecided persons in our congrega-
and hosts of half-hearted persons in our
ies. Many have attended our places for
and have never been pointedly spoken
one of our members as to the state of
souls. The minister preaches, but they
second his efforts. They seem to fancy
t is no part of their business. The gospel
ırist is hindered; the question is, *Who*
s it? Paul was deeply concerned lest
ould (1 Cor. ix. 12); but many professors
ıave no concern about it. They live, and
, and conduct themselves, as if it was no
n of theirs. Souls are hindered, but *who*
s them? The lawyers did once, but other
s differing from the lawyers do now.
ere is that marble statue that you see at
rmon but nowhere else, who speaks to no
ppears to care for no one,—he hinders.
is that covetous man, who never comes
yer-meeting lest he should miss taking
ice,—he hinders. There is that glumpy,
y, uncouth professor,—he hinders. There
light, vain, trifling professor,—he hinders.
is that proud, scornful, disdainful-looking

fiery, scolding professor,—
where shall we end? Ev
fessor, who has not the
does not copy his meekness
devotion, zeal, self-denial,
for the salvation of soul
hinders. Here is the c
there the dashing and t
bold and conceited, there
here the self-willed and lo
fisted and covetous; and a
stumbling-blocks in the w

A church composed of
bles the rocky desert, not t
cold ice-bound islet, not a
a barren plot covered wit

it, they hinder. Our churches must be happy, and happy-making churches, if they are to flourish. There must be freedom, fellowship, love, unity, peace, individual interest, and united concern felt for all who come into the congregation, or can be induced to come in, before we can expect them to be what we desire to see them. Ministers may preach, authors may write books, lively Christians may inquire and complain, but something else is wanting. Every church-member must realize his responsibility, must agonize with God, must endeavour to persuade men, must lay aside whatever is forbidding and repulsive; and all must follow "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," before we can expect our wishes to be fulfilled.

Ministers must be holy, energetic, simple, sound in the faith, with their hearts set upon the conversion of sinners and the edification of the saints, or, like the lawyers, *they will hinder*. Deacons must be spiritually-minded, active, sober, courteous, intent upon the church's prosperity, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, or *they will more or less hinder*. Church-members

be employed in God's service;
esteem others better than hims
ing his own things, but every
which are Jesus Christ's, *or t*
degree hinder. Brethren, Are
less guilty? Do not our imper
in the face? Ought we not
selves deeply before God? Sl
about an immediate reformation
our sin, confess it before God,
through the blood of Jesus, s
divine strength, purposing mo
the time past of our lives sha

"Awake, awake, put on thy strength,
Thy beautiful array;
The day of freedom dawns at length,
The Lord's appointed day.

"Rebuild thy walls, thy bounds enlarge,
And send thy heralds forth;
Say to the south—'Give up thy charge;
And keep not back, O north.'

"They come, they come: thine exiled bands,
Where'er they rest or roam,
Have heard thy voice in distant lands,
And hasten to their home.

"Thus, though the universe shall burn,
And God his works destroy,
With songs thy ransomed shall return,
And everlasting joy."

THE SAFEGUA

"When I see the blood, I will
Exod. xii. 13.



HE period for Israel's
Egypt had now ar
faithful to his wor
fulfils his promise,
people; and through them,
Church in all ages. The firs
are to be destroyed; but how sh
A lamb was to be selected, sepa

nant. It cleanses from all sin, and it secures all it cleanses. Let us look at—

This attractive object. Justice demands blood. God acknowledges the equity of the demand. But if the sinner bleed, his blood makes no atonement; if, therefore, he die once, his unatoned guilt demands that he suffer the second death, or never-ending punishment. But here is blood that attracts the eye of Justice, meets all its claims, and satisfies all its demands. Precious blood! It is the blood of *the Lamb*, which taketh away the sin of the world. The Lamb of God, the accepted substitute for man! —the Lamb of God, slain in the sinner's stead! —the Lamb of God, who becomes the food of all for whom he was slain! His blood is our safety. Sprinkled upon the door, no enemy could pass through to harm us; sprinkled upon the door, we are certainly and eternally safe! Our safety is not in the door, however strong; nor in the lock, however curious; nor in the bolts, however numerous—but in the blood. No blood on the door, no safety for the inhabitants within; no blood on the conscience, no safety from the messenger of death. Oh, reader! see to it that the blood of Christ is thy confidence—see to it that the blood of Christ is sprinkled on thy soul! For—

It must be on the door-posts and lintels. It is it enough for us that Jesus died, that he gone into heaven, that his people feed upon that his blood is in his church. It must applied to us. *God looks for the blood.* Th Israelite had blood on his door. God beheld every door and saw it, and then he passed ov My dear friend, God looks upon your heart, a your conscience; but does he see the blood blood of his own dear Son there? If he is he is satisfied, he is reconciled to you; b there is no blood, there is no satisfaction reconciliation, no peace. He will accept sacrifices, however costly; he will hear prayers, however earnest; he will regard sufferings, however painful; he will receive

atisfied with the blood of his dear Son,
is fully satisfied with every one that
s dependence on it; but he is satis-
nothing without this. Oh, see to it,
t your reliance is on the blood of Jesus
f any Israelite had substituted any-
the blood on the door, however costly,
beautiful, or however apparently rea-
he must have perished; the destroying
uld not have passed over him. Trust,
the blood of Jesus alone, and see—

neficial result. There was danger, for
ster of justice was going through the
ere was danger of violent death; so
are all in danger as sinners—in danger
cond death. But when the blood was
l, there was safety, perfect safety; so
en the blood of Jesus is sprinkled on
iences we are safe, eternally safe. God
atisfied, for the law has received all it
. He is pleased, for justice unites with
our salvation. He is pledged to secure
is word is passed, and he is faithful
ord. He says of all on whom he sees
d, "They shall never perish. No
formed against them shall prosper.
all be saved in the Lord with an ever-
lvation; they shall not be ashamed or

TOO LATE.

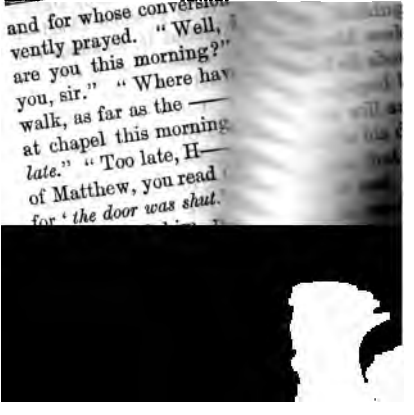
RETURNING from pu
terday morning, I n
one of my hearers,
tion I have long fel
and for whose conversion I ha
vently prayed. "Well, H——
are you this morning?" "Q
you, sir." "Where have you
walk, as far as the ——." "
at chapel this morning." "

ırole, we should teach all to look to, ...
ınd place entire dependence on, the blood
Jesus alone. Whether we speak, or whetl
we write, we should constantly say, "Not
crucifix, but the cross; not Mary, but Jes
not men's works, but a Saviour's precious bloc
See, finally, of what we *should beware*—of r
lecting the blood of Jesus, of substituting s
thing for the blood of Jesus, of mixing anytl
with the blood of Jesus, or of thinking lig
of the blood of Jesus. It is precious blood
is invaluable blood! Without it, *no sinner*
be saved; with it, *any sinner* may. Oh
soul, meditate on this blood; plead nothin
fore God but this blood; teach nothing a
ground of acceptance with God but this b
for comfort or salvatio

XXII.

TOO LATE

RETURNING from
terday morning,
one of my hear
tion I have long
and for whose conversion
vently prayed. "Well,
are you this morning?"
you, sir." "Where hav
walk, as far as the ——
at chapel this morning
late." "Too late, H——
of Matthew, you read
for '*the door was shut*.



why is this? Is it not a want of interest in the service? And does not this show a want of love to the Lord? If we are not interested in the worship of God now, how can we expect to feel an interest in it when we die? If we have no love to the house of God on earth, can we have any reason to hope that we should feel at home, or enjoy the service of God, in his house in heaven? Surely not. Again: how many are *too late* to join in the devotional parts of the service! The minister enters the pulpit; he rises to commence the service by prayer; he sees in every direction vacant seats, and seats which will be all filled when he is preaching the sermon. This dejects and dispirits him, and it tells a sad tale of his people. A minister of Christ, whose chapel is generally *crowded* during sermon, complained a few Lord's-days ago, that when he rose to commence the service, there were but about thirty persons present: this is sad, very sad. The writer went a short time ago to preach for a brother minister, and asking the deacon as to the attendance, he said, "We are pretty well attended, but our people come so very late; and our pastor is that kind-hearted sort of man that he does not like to say *anything* about it publicly, for fear *of hurting their* feelings." As the writer re-

g can prevent it.

was TOO LATE." This may prove true in a more solemn yet. Some will call upon when it is *too late*. Hence we read, "As ried, and *they* would not hear; so *they* cried, *I* would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts" h. vii. 13). Again: "Then shall they call me, but I will not answer; they shall seek arly, but they shall not find me" (Prov.). Once more: "Afterward came also the virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. he answered and said, Verily I say unto

honestly? Yes; but I was TOO LATE. What made you too late? Ah! you loved pleasure—you enjoyed sin—you listened to Satan—you followed the multitude—you chose death rather than life.

Reader! how is it with you? Do you attend the means of grace *regularly?* Do you take your place in the Lord's house *early?* Do you listen to God's Word *attentively?* Do you join in the prayers offered *heartily?* Do you seek salvation *diligently?* Is the welfare of the soul to you *the one thing needful?* If not, let me beseech *you to* beware; do not procrastinate, *do not delay. If* you do, it may be "too late."



a careful examination, is the extreme of folly. No book has existed so long as part of the Bible, no book has wrought such wonders as the Bible, and in the Bible we find the gospel. It is the history of God's love, the revelation of God's mercy, and points out the only way of escape from God's wrath. But what is its design?

1. *To give us a correct view of God's character.*—It sets before us his holiness, his justice, his veracity, his faithfulness, his grace, his mercy, and his love; and it shows us how all these perfections harmonize in the salvation of a sinner, through the glorious work of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is holy, and cannot sanctio

pities sinners, and is disp
He is love, and will disp
his bitterest enemies, i
gracious throne. But ho
butes harmonize in the s
and rebellious sinner?
convinced of his state, aw
and becomes alarmed at
the gospel, he perceives
for sinners; he believes it
in God's way; he is ea
and diligent in the use
God saves him, and save
eternally. All *his* sins
Jesus, or placed to his
received full satisfactio

vites the sinner to come and be saved freely and for ever. The sinner hears, believes, comes to God by Jesus, and is pardoned. God is thus faithful to his word, and just to the sacrifice of his Son, in forgiving the sins of the man who heartily confesses them at his throne. Thus the gospel reveals God's true character. But the design of the gospel is,—

2. *To bring back the sinner's heart to God.*—We are by nature all estranged from God, careless about God, and at enmity with God. If we think of him, we conclude that he is very much like ourselves, and go on with very little concern whether we please or displease him. If he is in our thoughts, he is not in our hearts. If we perform any religious services, we draw nigh to him with our mouths, and honour him with our lips, while our hearts are far from him. Nature suggests some fine thoughts of God, but it cannot win back the heart to God. The law reveals some of the glorious attributes of God, but it never brings back the heart of the sinner to love and obey God. It is the design of the gospel to do this. The good news informs us that God thought of us, pitied us, provided a way of salvation for us, and opened up a plain path to heaven for us, without solicitation or desire on our part. That he delights to show

MANY persons professing
find it necessary to emp
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be more unscriptural. As we sho
present and everlasting welfare of
so especially of those who are em
and minister to our comfort. Nor
liever in Jesus discharge his duty
tics and dependents, unless he feel

are deacons of churches who *never* pray in their families, nor even ask a blessing on their food; who employ both male and female servants, but who never speak to them about their souls. And it is to be feared that there are many members of churches in just the same state. How can we expect our churches to flourish? How can we expect servants to have correct ideas of religion? How can we expect our houses to be nurseries for the church, while such a state of things exists? Preachers may preach, pastors may complain, but until we have more real religion in our members, there will not be much done.

Reader, do you keep a servant; or do you employ labourers or assistants? If so, do you realize the value of their immortal souls? Do you feel laid under a solemn obligation to seek their salvation? Does the love of Christ constrain you to travail in birth for their souls? Or can you see them careless about their souls, neglecting the Bible, and going direct to hell, without any deep feeling or concern? If you can, where is the evidence of your own interest in Christ, or union to Christ? If you were really one with Christ, would you not sympathize *with Christ*? But can you sympathize *with him who wept* over Jerusalem, and died

you? It is quite time that some churcl
resigned their offices—that some chur
bers gave up their profession of reli
changed their conduct in this particula
servants perish, they are guilty of mora
and they are accessory to the crime. T
prayerless, but they never warn them
neglect to read the Bible, and they ne
it to them. They go not to hear the
and they make no hearty effort to get
do so. Do not, my friends, turn away
subject and say, with some of old, "Y
to bring these men's blood upon us;" :
haps on you already. The blood of
invisible, but it stains deep, it cries
demands justice; and nothing but
application of the blood of Christ can
it; but if that blood is really applied to
your pardon, it will secure your refo
Masters and mistresses in Israel, help



...n, about salvation ... way to obtain it. Watch for a suitable opportunity, and get them to sit by you alone, while you warn them of their danger; invite them to Jesus, and tell them of the nature, importance, and happiness of real religion. Give them the religious tract, or the attractive little volume, which sets the way of salvation clearly before them; ask them to read it, and inquire if they have done so, and if they understand it. If they cannot read, read it to them; or read to them portions of God's Word, and, as you are able, show them the meaning of what you read; for many clever servants are grossly ignorant on religious subjects. Pray *for them by name* in private, and sometimes take them aside and *pray with them*. Always have them in to *family prayer*, and let them learn from your

Word every Lord's day, and, i
least occasionally in the week.
are often made so by those who
and irreligious servants are confi
irreligion by the conduct of thos
them. The conversation of the p
carried into the kitchen, and un
the preacher has done in the
Our influence for good or evil is i
that we did but realize it as we
every one look on each one whon
and ask, "Can I do anything fo
that man, that woman? Shall t

version of those about him; and "let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, SHALL *save a soul from death*, and hide a multitude of sins." Masters, mistresses, arise! Realize your responsibility. Pity your servants. Seek their conversion to God. Strive for the salvation of their souls. Be determined, that if every one in your employment perish, the soul shall enter hell in despite of your prayers, efforts, example, and sympathies. "Deliver us from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of our salvation."

"I want a principle within,
Of godly, jealous fear;
A sensibility of sin,
A pain to feel it near!

"That I from thee no more may part
No more thy goodness grieve;
The filial awe, the contrite heart,
The tender conscience give.

"Quick as the apple of an eye,
O God, my conscience make;
Awake my soul when sin is nigh,
And keep it still awake."



E always consider good s
honourable characters.
a comfort to the fami
they live, and a blessi
whom they are surrounded. But
really good servants but such as
precepts of God's Word their rule..
servant will often read over the c
Holy Scriptures, and earnestly pra
to reduce them to practice. A g
will obey his employers for the L
he will perceive that God has app
to be a servant, and he can glorif

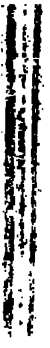
what *you say*, but what *you do*, that will impress and affect your employers. Your life should preach the gospel to them. They ought to *see* that religion makes you more patient, industrious, submissive, obliging, and cheerful than other servants. That you have another spirit in you. That you walk by another rule. That you act as under the eye of God. That you have that precept continually before you, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, *in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;* with good will doing service, *as to the Lord*, and not to men: *knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord*, whether he be bond or free" (Eph. vi. 5, 7, 8).

But the subject to which we wish especially to call your attention, is *your duty to your unconverted fellow-servants.* Most servants have unconverted fellow-servants associated with them; over these they *must* exercise an influence, either good or bad. They are daily making *some* impression upon them, but the question is, *Is it the right impression?* You ought to set your heart upon bringing your fellow-servants to God. Their speedy conversion to God should be kept constantly before your eye. With

words and little attentions will often do
If you are willing to oblige them, as far an
frequently as you can, without sin, you
soon win their hearts; for kindness is al
omnipotent. Do not be always talking to t
about religion, but watch for opportuni
Walk religiously always, but only talk of reli
occasionally. Make them *feel* that you wis
do them good. Speak a word for God w
ever you have a good opportunity. S
kindly as a friend, not as if you felt you
superior. Invite them to accompany yo
the house of God, when you can get ou
gether. Offer them the use of your *seat*
books when you cannot go with them.
what you can to commend your ministe
them, and to awaken in them a desire to
him. Talk after the services of the sern
you have heard, repeat short striking pass
Tell them of any interesting anecdotes

tract or little book. Offer to *lend* them *The Church*, and *give* them the tracts. Be determined to leave no stone unturned, or neglect the use of any means, until you see them decided believers on the Son of God. Say, both by your words and deeds, "If you perish in your sins, it shall not be through any neglect of mine. If you will go to hell, I will not be accessory to your destruction." Set apart special times to pray for them, and pray for their immediate conversion. Pray for them by name. Pray as if you were really in earnest for their salvation, as if your heart's desire and prayer to God was, that they might be saved. Pray for them when you sit by them in the house of God. Pray for them when you know that they are gone out Sabbath-breaking, and are running into temptation. Never despair of doing them good. Never give way to the thought that God will not use such a poor instrument as you are. God does use just such, and will most probably use you, if you really wish him to do so.

I knew a young woman of no particular talent, who, though not exactly a servant at the time, *had been;* and who, at the time referred to, *gained* her living by needlework, *went to* hear a sermon one week



one: the impression made upon ne
"If that is real religion, I am a str
By that sermon the Holy Spirit c
soul. When she began to enjoy
self, she became intensely interes
concerned for, the salvation of her c
ances. She was living with a wic
tended the village church, was a
godliness, and deeply prejudiced
senters. She endeavoured to inc
accompany her to the chapel, but
length, one Lord's day evening, sl
pleading with her so long, that at l
vailed; but having two miles to g
so late that the sermon was begun.
widow heard she very much dislike
up her mind that nothing should

were all brought to God. She had a sister with four daughters and a son; and they were all led to the Saviour. A number of others from the same village were turned from darkness to light, and a considerable number regularly attended all the means of grace, of whom we cannot speak decidedly. Here, then, was *one* young woman, of no extraordinary attainments, in humble circumstances, brought to the knowledge of the truth. Her heart glows with love to Christ. She travails in birth for souls. She labours to bring others under the means, and the result is two whole families are made happy in the Lord, others are consecrated to God, and who shall say where it will end!

Other cases might be mentioned, but I introduce this because I knew all the parties, many of whom are now living, and can attest its truth. Servants, *set your heart* upon the conversion of souls, especially the souls of those who live and labour with you. Let nothing satisfy you but bringing souls to Christ. Live for this. Labour for this. Pray for this. It cannot be in vain; you will reap a rich reward in your own soul, even if you do not witness the success you wish. Our members who are servants should be our *home missionaries*; they *should carry the gospel* where we cannot go.

converted fellow-servants to be
must be a reality. As I he
the other day, referring to th
consistent life of a near relati
there is something in religio
which it has made in him."

If an unconverted servant
I would say to such a one,
against religion by any inco
you see in some who profess i
have been mere professors;
judiced against a good sovere
are counterfeits; but we t
between them. Do you do

world, and glorious in
to come. May the Lord bless eve
vant who reads these lines, and make eve
what every Christian should be! Amen.

"Jesus, thou dost not sue in vain;
Oh, take what I can never give:
Thyself must give the power to man
His proffered Saviour to receive,
While knocking at the door thou art,
And pleading with his stubborn heart.

"Come in, thou supplicant divine—
I hear thy voice and open now:
Take my poor heart, no longer mine,
Enter with all thy fulness thou:
Take my poor heart ('tis all thine own),
And never leave this humble throne."

XXVI.

REAL RELIGION



OME persons pretend t
know that they h
Others fancy they ha
are deceived. The
the people do not know what r
Ask the first person you meet,
religion?" Ten to one if he ca
you may often ask many, and
know. Some fancy it is goin
worship, believing certain d
through a round of forms, an
number of religious duties. B

...v. God is light, and in
...u darkness at all. God is an infinite be
id he is infinitely holy, just, true, faithl
od, and merciful. He has clothed him
ith our nature, acted in our world, and spok
our language, to make himself known to c
llen race. We must, therefore, look at th
ord Jesus as God manifested in the flesh
giving us an exact, perfect, and complet
resentation of God. God was in Christ
rist was God over all, and blessed for ever-
e. Men in general have partial, imperfect,
unscriptural views of God; and while this
e case they cannot be really religious; for
is life eternal, to know thee, the only
God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou

holy fellowship —
love to think of God. We love to [illegible]
We love to speak with God. We love to praise God. He is the object of our faith, hope, desire, and affection. We cannot endure the thought of separation from him, or being banished from his presence; the sense and enjoyment of his presence would constitute a heaven anywhere.—This is real religion.

Thirdly, *It includes obedience to God.*—The obedience of the heart, and the obedience of the life. Obedience that flows from love, and is performed cheerfully. He that does not practically conform to God's will, makes it manifest that his heart is not in a right state towards God. We cannot know him as revealed [illegible] not love him; we cannot love him [illegible]

light, love, and holiness; or right views of God, a right state of heart towards God, and the practical conformity of the life to the will of God. Reader! are you really religious? Knowledge without power will not do. Impressions without dedication to God are not enough. There must be the knowledge of God, love to God, and likeness to the moral image of God. We must know his name, love his perfections, and do his will, or we are not really religious. God must be seen in Christ, the enmity of the heart must be slain, thorough reconciliation to God must be effected, and the whole person be devoted unreservedly to his praise and glory. If this is the true state of the case (and what careful reader of the Bible can doubt it), then how very few, comparatively, are really religious. My reader, are you? How long have you been so? Of every mere talker, of every unholy walker, however orthodox his creed or profound his knowledge of doctrine may be, it will be said by-and-by, "*That man's religion is vain.*" It does not please God; it does not bring peace of conscience; it does not reflect God's image; it does not save its possessor from hell—God rejects it; Satan cares not for it; man is not benefited by it;—*It is vain.* The Lord preserve

"Cast, he said, on me thy care,
'Tis enough that I am nigh
I will all thy burdens bear,
I will all thy wants supply.

"Simply follow as I lead,
Do not reason, but believe;
Call on me in time of need,
Thou shalt surely help rece

"Lord, I would indeed submit,
Gladly yield my all to thee
What thy wisdom sees most f
Must be, surely, best for m

XXVII.

THE FALLEN PROFESSOR.

"A deceived heart hath turned him aside."
Isa. xliv. 20.

THIS is true of very many in the present day. They professed religion, for a time they did run well, we were full of hope respecting them, ey are turned aside. Self-examination is important, but especially so before we public profession of Christ. Let a man e himself thoroughly, and so

guide. He professed to rely on the *pro*
The Bible was his book, and a sound *g*
ministry his delight. He was regular i
attendance upon the means of grace. He
not only to the sermons, but to the pr
meetings. His attention, and apparent
tion, were pleasing and encouraging. His
eye, and serious behaviour, inspired us
confidence. There was nothing light, or
less, or indecorous; he was in behaviour a
cometh godliness. He was useful in his st
in life. He spoke for Christ to his fellow
took a class in the Sunday school, he wrot
ligious letters, he distributed gospel tract
appeared desirous of benefiting all around
—he was his pastor's hope, the church's

What is done? He is turned aside. He has turned from God. The closet is forsaken. He prays no more. The truth is given up, and lax, if not infidel, principles are embraced, propagated, and defended. Duty is disregarded; he feels like Pharaoh, if he does not speak like him, when he said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?" The church is despised and forsaken. The prayer-meeting was first neglected, then he only attended the public services once on the Lord's day. Then he only came occasionally. At last he gave up altogether. He was warned, but he despised the warning. He was exhorted, but he rejected the exhortation. The world flattered him, pride took possession of him, and Satan gained the complete mastery over him. He withdrew from his old associates, and from the field of labour; as he did not enjoy religion, he could not, he would not, labour to bring others to seek it. The Bible was left unopened, the voice of conscience was stifled, the company of the godly was shunned, and he turned aside to folly. What he once despised, he now values. The company he once avoided, he now seeks. Vanity is his characteristic, and vanity will be his recompense. He is turned aside after Satan, who *now rules in his* heart, leads captive his affec-

flesh, the lust of the eye, and the
He cannot bear reflection, he
much alone, he has become the
world, and is completely turned a

But what did it? A deceived
heart hath turned him aside. E
sented in a fascinating dress. Pr
was fostered. Satan laid his s
his temptations to his age, tem
position, and circumstances: he
and was caught by the hook. Hi
were pampered, and the reins
upon their neck. He became gid
and was deceived. But how w
to this state? He walked on th
of Christian liberty, instead o
keeping as near to the Saviou
He yielded to temptation, first s
reference to little things, which
for greater; for if Satan can get



the weakness of nature, the force of circumstances, and the custom of the times. He listened to false teachers, whose business is always to lead us to think lightly of sin, meanly of the Saviour, highly of self, and unscripturally of God. He read improper books, such as feed vanity, excite lust, pamper pride, produce levity, lead from God, unfit for prayer, and secretly undermine religion. He became deluded, laughed at his former fears, ridiculed his conscientious scruples, questioned the truth of revelation, and affected to pity those fanatics who talk of experimental religion, degrade human nature, and incessantly dwell upon exploded doctrines and old-fashioned practices. Thus the Holy Spirit was grieved and vexed, so that he was given up to his own heart's lusts, and he walked in his own counsels. Lively Christians were forsaken and treated with contempt. The cultivation or preservation of the heart was entirely neglected. The eye was left at liberty to rove and pry into improper objects and subjects. The ear became the entrance to what was polluting, misleading, and degrading; and the carnal desire to know practically what the lowest degrees of sin can be is indulged, and so the text is fulfilled, "A *deceived heart hath* turned him aside."



Let him that thinketh he standeth, lest he fall." Get close to God, and to God. "Resist the devil, and he om you." Be thou in the fear of the he day long. Keep at the greatest istance from temptation. If Satan u to listen, he may get you to look; ou to look, he may get you to desire; ou to desire, he will get you to yield. e strong for strength. Cultivate a our own weakness. Live and walk ip with Jesus. Often think of the

clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. *For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them*" (2 Pet. ii. 17–21). Young men, beware. Curious, critical hearers, take heed. Men of business, who are much in the company of the world, stand in awe. Your adversary, the devil, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Let us all daily pray, "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings. *Create in me* a clean heart, O God, renew a

thy statutes continually.

"And will ye go away
From Christ, as some of old?
Who walked no more, the Scripture
With him and with his fold.

"And will ye go away
From Christ, his house, his friend
His table, his delightful day,
And bliss that never ends?

"And will ye go away?
And whither will you go?
Will you in sin and bondage stray
To everlasting woe?

"Dear Lord, one bliss impart
('Tis not for heaven we pray);
But—let us not from thee depart;
No, NEVER go away."

XXVIII.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSCIENCE.

FOR CONVICTION.

HAVE I been duly affected with the present low state of the Church of Christ?

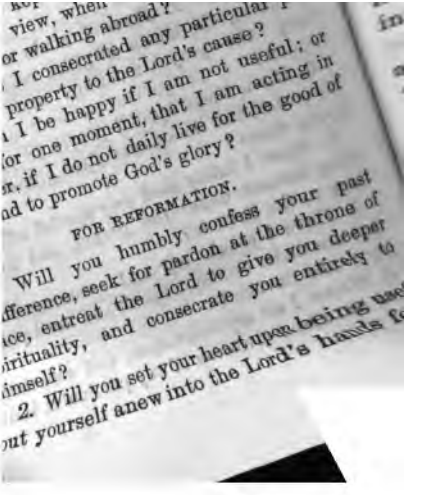
2. Have I made conscience of attending the means of grace regularly, especially the prayer-meetings and week-day sermon?

3. Have I used special prayer in private for my pastor, and the success of the gospel in these trying times?

4. Have I lately used any special efforts to bring sinners under the gospel, and to lead them to the Saviour?

5. Have I sought out and encouraged any that are under concern of soul, and need pointing to the Saviour?

6. Have I set my heart upon, and especially aimed at, *the conversion* of any particular *individual?*



view, whe
or walking abroad?
I consecrated any particular
property to the Lord's cause?
I be happy if I am not useful; or
for one moment, that I am acting in
or, if I do not daily live for the good of
nd to promote God's glory?

FOR REFORMATION.

Will you humbly confess your past
fference, seek for pardon at the throne of
ace, entreat the Lord to give you deeper
irituality, and consecrate you entirely to
imself?

2. Will you set your heart upon being use
ut yourself anew into the Lord's hands fo

and for his glory?

5. Will you, at least once in the day, offer up special prayer for your pastor, that God would more thoroughly sanctify him, and greatly increase his usefulness?

6. Will you make conscience of retiring for a short time each day, to plead with God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church and the world?

7. Will you, from this day, make a point of being more regular in your attendance upon the means of grace, and never be absent from the prayer-meeting, if you can possibly avoid it?

8. Will you consider it to be your duty to invite every person to the house of God who does not *regularly* attend there, if you consistently *can*; and when any one attends whom

10. Will you read over th
Laodiceans (Rev. iii. 14–22) at
week, and pray earnestly agai
lukewarm state?

11. Will you write at le
month to some unconverted o
son—a relative or an acquaint
ing to bring the soul to the Sa

12. Will you introduce
religious literature to your (
and purchase as many tracts
yourself monthly, and presen
verted persons, with special

XXIX.

THE CHURCHES' COMPLAINT.

"We see not our signs."—Ps. lxxiv. 9.

THIS was the complaint of the Lord's people of old, and it is the complaint of many now. We sow much, and reap little. We use many means, but we realize but little success. We are ready to ask, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" We see not our signs, or proofs, or tokens that our God is among us, that he is pleased with us, and that he is working by us. We want signs of,—

1. *Life imparted to sinners dead in trespasses and sins.* To know that they discover their lost condition, feel the danger to which they are exposed, and sigh and groan for deliverance therefrom. To perceive that they are breathing the breath of life, or praying, like Saul of Tarsus, with the spirit and the understanding also. To discover that they are feeding upon *the* bread of heaven, and desiring the sincere

zealous for their God; not
worldly, not half-hearted, but t
energies into his cause. Livi
living *to* God. To find thei
God, as Jacob of old, resolve
blessing, if earnest, fervent p
it down. Flocking to praye
embracing every opportunity
God for his spirit and grace.
they are all *active* for God, ever
proper and appropriate spher
are loiterers in the heavenly
the Lord's vineyard. To know
of old, they are mourning after
cannot be happy, will not be
he return unto his Jerusalem
and cause the wilderness
blossom as the rose. Oh, tha
people were lively! That
devoted, and bringing forth

half feel our need of a revival as we ought. We are too well satisfied with the present state of things. Some try to make the best of them; others talk about them, but are not grieved or pained at heart because the city is low, in a low place. Few feel a glowing desire for what they admit is desirable. We are only half-hearted. We are not deeply affected. Our desires for a revival of religion never keep us awake by night, stimulate us to rise early for prayer, or lead us to set apart special seasons for agonizing with God until he pour us out the blessing. We are languid and comparatively lifeless. Oh, that God would thoroughly rouse us up, and give us such a burning desire for a change, that we may get no rest until we obtain it! Before a revival can be expected, there must be a rallying together to pray for it. Pastors, deacons, and members must set their hearts upon it, and meet together, thoroughly in earnest to obtain it. We want to be impressed with a deep sense of the need of an *immediate revival* of religion in our souls, in our churches, in our congregations, in our families, and in the world at large. To feel a glowing desire to obtain it, and, as the result, to rally together by hundreds to seek for it. Mere *talking is* no use. Writing upon the subj

must undergo a change; t
formal, less commonplace.
pray as if they meant ever
All present must unite. Ev
engaged. All must be ener
one object—even that God w
quickening, converting, and
We may complain, "We se
and it is very likely that w
except we individually stir u
hold upon God (Is. lxiv. 7).
our covetousness, our pride, o
Laodicean self-satisfaction,
have separated between us

tians which the times call for. Few are deciding for God in our congregations; the work, in the best, is slight; there is a want of depth, and spirituality, and experimental certainty about them. Few are inquiring the way to Zion with their faces thitherward. Few appear properly affected with the present state of things. We have spoken of them, but where is the result? We have written of them, but to what effect? Some are tired of the subject, and want smoother things; they say, "Prophesy smooth things." But how can we do so? The only wonder is, that we can take any rest, or even enjoy our many mercies, while the Church is in such a state. Beloved, what is to be done? Shall we hold our peace? Shall we take our rest? Preachers are complaining; pastors are unsettled; church members are dissatisfied; congregations, in many places, are decaying; and where things are at the best, but little is doing. Let us humble ourselves before the Lord. Let us seize a few minutes every day to plead with God for a revival. Let us be determined to give him no rest until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high. "O God, arise, and let thine enemies be scattered," convert thy foes, fill thy friends *with the* Holy Ghost and with power, and

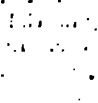
to be out of course, and "we
Surely perilous times are o
around us—in nature, in p
grace—calls for deep seriou
threatened—pestilence is a
scarce—trade is dull—wint
poor are suffering—Satan is
is low—and the Lord's ser
"Who hath believed our re
is the arm of the Lord reve
let us *arise as one man*, and
truth of our Saviour's words,
shall ask the Father in my n
it you" (John xvi. 23).

"Near to each other and
Lord, bring us all in uni

XXV.

A GOOD CHARACTER.

"Approved in Christ."—ROMANS xvi. 10.



We know not *who* Apelles was; but we are told *what* he was. He was a Christian, for he was "in Christ." He was a consistent Christian, for he was "approved in Christ." He was created "anew in Christ Jesus unto good works," and was a living proof of the apostle's statement, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." His character was good, his state was enviable, his commendation was honourable. Oh, to be in Christ!—this is our highest honour. Oh, to be approved in Christ!—this is true dignity. Let us think of it. Let us aim at it. Let us pray over it. Let us strive for it. We may be in Christ, and so be eternally safe. We may be approved in Christ, and so be "found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Let us *briefly* consider,—



He appointed us to this blessed
cient covenant. He called us
the fulness of time. To be "i
be *quickened by his Spirit.* We
dead in sin. We have no spi
walk according to the course of
are the "children of wrath, e
And in this state we remain, u
in rich mercy, for the great lov
loved us, quickens us togethe
and saves us by his grace. Lif
communicated instantaneously
the voice of the Son of God," an
live. Then they feel their need
about Christ, desire to possess
interest in Christ, and can fi
they come to Christ. To be "
be *justified by his obedience.* H
is placed to our account, his gl

gives us a warrant to appropriate it. By faith we embrace it. God justifies us through it, accepts us in it, and we are entitled to glory by it. We now have peace with God. We now joy in God. Jesus is precious, unspeakably precious to our souls. We love him, but cannot love him as we desire. We adore him, but cannot exalt him as we wish. We speak of him, but are never satisfied with what we say, and thereof often exclaim,—

> "I would for ever speak his name,
> In sounds to mortal ears unknown;
> With angels to join to praise the Lamb,
> And worship at his Father's throne."

To be "in Christ" is to be *ruled by his word.* Custom must now give place to precept—fashion and feeling to the law of Christ. For no man is justified by his work, who does not reverence and obey his word. The soul naturally asks What does my Saviour wish me to do? how would he have me walk? what does he require of me? And the precepts of the New Covenant answer these inquiries most fully. There is no need of tradition. There is no necessity for the direction of the priest. For the man "in Christ" finds that the Holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for

of every course he pursue
honour Jesus in his thoughts
his converse, in his conduct,
Does he work? It is to ho
he suffer? He aims to hon
he give his property? It i
He is willing to lie low, that
alted. He is willing to di
that he may exalt the Savio
his voice unite in saying,—

"Let him be crowned with
Who bowed his head t
And be his honours soun

time, came into the world in time, lived, laboured, agonized, and died, to save souls. He sent forth his apostles, gave his Holy Spirit, and commanded his Church to preach the gospel to every creature, in order to save souls. And if we do not long and labour to bring souls to Jesus, we have another and an opposite spirit in us; and if we have a spirit opposite to the spirit of Christ, can we be approved of Christ? Yea, can we be Christ's at all? Hear the apostle—"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Beloved, are you in Christ? Have you been quickened by his Spirit? Are you clothed in his righteousness? Are you ruled by his word? Are you united to his person? There is no safety out of Christ. There is no true honour without union to Christ. You can have no title to heaven except you are one with Christ. To be without Christ is to be under God's curse, exposed to eternal woe, and to be surrounded by all the elements of misery in the present world. Never rest short of union to Christ. Are you approved in Christ? Do you breathe his spirit? Do you copy his example? Do you habitually aim at his honour? Are you daily endeavouring to bring poor sinners to *him? Search,* examine closely, look narrowly

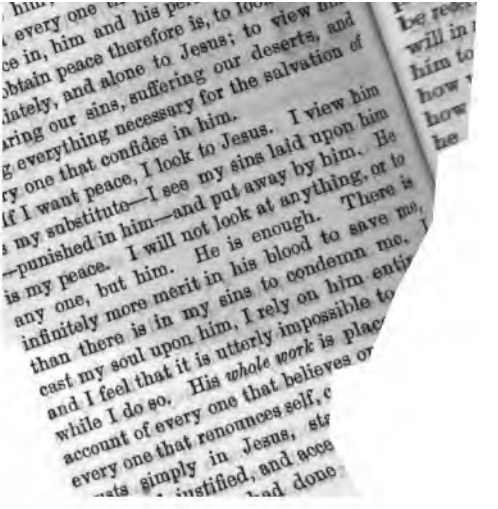
in every thing to honour him
the day when you shall be in
glorious presence of Christ,
with him.

"Heavenly Adam, life d
Change my nature into
Move and spread throu
Actuate and fill the wh
Be it I no longer now,
Living in the flesh, but

XXXI.

HOW SHALL I OBTAIN PEACE?

I HAVE sinned, and I fear God is angry. I feel guilty, and I dread the thought of appearing before him. I am anxious and disquieted, and can obtain no rest. I try to pray, but am no better. I read the Bible, but it produces no change. I hear the gospel, but it does me no good. I know not what to do, which way to look, or how to get relief. *How shall I obtain peace?*



. suffered all that Jesus suffered, in his own oper person. With him justice is satisfied. For him the whole law has been fulfilled. To him the whole work of Christ is imputed. He is passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation. This is the way to obtain peace.

But may any sinner obtain peace in this way? Yes, any sinner. Jesus says to every one to whom the gospel comes, "Come unto me," and pledges his word that every coming sinner shall be received; for he says, "Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." Nothing can induce him to cast out a coming sinner. No matter how vile, how depraved, how sinful, how old, how hardened, how unworthy, the sinner is, if he comes he shall be received, and received cheerfully, readily, and with a smile. Every one that comes to Jesus by prayer and faith, is instantly pardoned, perfectly justified, honourably reconciled to God, and put in possession of a title to everlasting life. Now, if a sinner is pardoned, justified, reconciled to God, and possesses a title to eternal life, will not this give him peace? *I think so. I know it will;* for I have found peace in this way myself. There must be no reference to works, to feelings, to purposes of amendment, to the failure of pro-

damned." This is the
ve it, act upon it, hold him to it, and
sting life is yours! O Saviour,—

"Guilty and weak, to thee I fly,
On thy atoning blood rely,
And on thy righteousness depend:
My Lord, my Saviour, and my Friend.

"Be all my heart, be all my days
Devoted to thy single praise!
And let my glad obedience prove
How much I owe, how much I love."

—,

I fly,
r,
i depend:
d my Friend.

y days
ise!
ce prove
much I love."

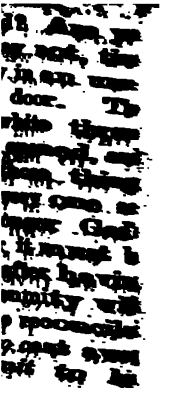


the writer wished to convey; but it is
to a variety of subjects. Let us
few.

Have you a quarrel with any one?
not" to make it up, for "time flie
you do not become reconciled soon,
tunity will perhaps pass away. Li
enmity with any one, for this is contr
law, which says, "Thou shalt love t
bour as thyself." It is contrary to t
which says, "Be kindly affectioned
other." It is contrary to your exam
is *the Lord* Jesus Christ, who pra
very murderers, saying, "Father, f

portunity for ever. Have yo
for God? Then take your pl
is called to-day, "time flies,"
soon be over. Have you eng
thing to the cause of God
pledge; the present time ma
the purpose, to-morrow may l

Have you been reconciled t
at peace with him? If not,
flies," and you may be called
conciled state. Death is at
Judge is on his way. The g
will soon appear, the books w



you entrusted the keeping of your soul t
He only can soothe your sorrows, suppl
wants, guide your steps, conquer your fo
make you more than a conqueror ov
death, hell, and the grave. His fri
may be secured; but "delay not, time
if you neglect to seek him *now*, you may
find him when you wish.

Have you sought grace for future tria
you may bear them with Christian pa
and be improved by them in your Ch
character? If not, "delay not, time
There is a fulness of grace in Jesus.
be had. But it must be sought, and
early, earnestly, and with importunit
apostle says, "Let us have grace." "

e grace that is in C… God does
ing to be gracious. …
cy. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the
one of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and
d grace to help in time of need."
Have you obtained satisfactory evidence for
eaven? If not, "delay not, time flies." Live
ot in a world like this, in times like these,
without the inward witness of the Holy Spirit,
without scriptural assurance that if your earthly
house, which is a tabernacle, be dissolved, you
have a building of God, a house not made with
hands, eternal in the heavens. In a word,
whatever good remains to be done, whatever
evil remains to be overcome, whatever engage-
ments have to be fulfilled, whatever duty
… performed, think of the inscription
… *time flies*." "Whatso-
… it with thy
… in

"Be it my only wisdom here,
To serve the Lord with filial fear,
With loving gratitude:
Superior sense may I display,
By shunning every evil way,
And walking in the good.

"Oh, may I still from sin depart!
A wise and understanding heart,
Jesus, to me be given;
And let me through thy Spirit know,
To glorify my God below,
And find my way to heaven.

"Oh, let thy Spirit shed abroad
The love, the perfect love of God,
In this cold heart of mine!
Oh, might he now descend, and rest,
And dwell for ever in my breast,
And make it all divine!

"Take the dear purchase of thy blood,
My friend and advocate with God,
My ransom and my peace:
Surety, who all my debt hast paid,
For all my sins atonement made,
The Lord my righteousness."

XXXIII.

NO COMPLAINING.

"Wherefore doth a living man complain?"
LAM. iii. 39.



OMPLAINING is a bad business. It is unbecoming in a sinner, and it is unworthy a saint. Complain! Why have we not all more than we deserve? If we had our desert, should we not debarred every comfort—should we not be d from hope—and would not our po pitiless pit? Complain! W rounded by so

But you have had losses. Well, suppose you have, look at what you have left, as well as at what you have lost. You have *life*, you are a *living man*; you might have been cut off, for you have no right to life, you lie absolutely at God's mercy. You might have been a corpse, a lost soul; but you are not, therefore do not complain! You have *hope*; for be as vile as you may, the gospel lays a foundation for your hope. Believing in Jesus, your sins will be pardoned, your losses will be sanctified, and your soul will be saved. Hope is a light in the darkest night, an anchor in the most terrific storm, and a pillow for the weary head in this trying world. Look to Jesus, and hope for all you need, for all he has promised, for all that can really do you good, but—never complain. You have many *mercies*—new mercies every morning—the same mercies renewed every day. All you have is from mercy. You are not entitled by law to the slightest alleviation. All flows to you from the kind heart of God, on the ground of the glorious sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. You have national mercies, home mercies, and heart mercies; and not only so, but if you walk with God, your mercies will be endless; thank God then, and take courage, but—*never complain*. You have opportunities



..., you may relieve the poor, and che
them; you may teach the young, and bene
them; you may induce persons to attend Go
house, and perhaps instrumentally save the
You may do good every day, and do good
little cost, and in a variety of ways; up, th
and work for the good of others, but—ne
complain.

Never complain, for what good will it d
It pays no debts, performs no duties, heals
wounds, removes no troubles, relieves no s
rows, conquers no foes, procures no blessin
It never did any good to the complainer, or
those who listened to the complaints. It
pure unmixed evil. Turn your complai
into prayers, pour them into the bosom of G
and then good will ...

mourn, then, before God, but never murmur at anything that comes from God; bear your trials patiently, but—never complain. Upon what principle can you justify it? Surely there is nothing in God's nature, in God's book, or in God's ways, that will justify your complaining. There is nothing in your state, or circumstances, or prospects, that will justify your complaining. Complainers are bad companions, worthless church members, and inconsistent Christians, therefore—never complain.

"Oh, sir," says some one, "if you knew my afflictions, disappointments, fears, and foes, you would not wonder at my complaining." Yes, I should, for ten to one if you would have had so many trials but for your complaining disposition. If you love complaining, you will never want something to complain about; and if you complain under your present troubles, expect greater. You have no real cause to complain while you have so many mercies left you; and if you were only grateful for what you have, God would soon give you many more. He loves to heap favours upon the grateful; but who likes to assist those who are continually complaining? Some complain of their husbands, others of their wives, others of their children, others of their parents, others of their employment, other-

"*wherefore doth a living man complain?*"
procured all he complains of. Grace w
turn the greatest cross into a blessing. Br
ren, let us check the complaining spirit in
selves, for if we do not it will grow upon
Pastors are complaining of people, and pe
of pastors, and both pastors and people
deacons, and what good does all this do?
us admonish, expostulate, entreat, reason,
pray; this may do good. Let us look over
catalogue of the mercies we have in hand,
the property we have in hope, and then
plain if we can. Rather let us seek grace t
grateful, humble, diligent and devoted to G
let us cast our sorrows where God has cast
sins, and let us have grace whereby we
serve God acceptably with reverence and g
fear. Hear what God says, and act upo
and complaining will soon die a natural de

Thy comforts, countless as the sands,
Now crown my favoured lot;
And each my warmest praise demands,
But ah! how oft forgot!

"Shall one so favoured e'er repine!
Or one so vile complain!
No; let me praise, for thou art mine—
And mine thou wilt remain."





"THE LORD IS THY KEEPER."

PSALM CXXI. 5.



UR safety and happiness lie in w
the Lord is to us. In darkness,
is our light; in weakness, he is
strength; in danger, he is our
fuge; at all times, he is our keeper. He ne
trusts his people in any hands but his o
"Yea, he loved the people; all his saints ar
thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; ev
one shall receive of thy words" (Deut. xxxiii.
The Great Shepherd has said, "No one sh
pluck them out of my hand." Let us notice

1. *The objects of the divine care.* His peo
—his children—his sheep—the whole of th
To each it may be said, "*The Lord is*
keeper." But how are they known? H
shall *we* know that the Lord is our keep

ns neither wisdom nor power to keep himself; hat he must be kept by one greater and wiser han himself, or he is undone. Those whom he Lord keeps, perceive that they are exposed o foes and dangers innumerable—that they are ever safe for one moment if left to themselves —that they must fall, except an omnipotent and uphold them—that their enemies will riumph over them, except the Lord be a wall f fire round about them. Therefore, they put hemselves into the Lord's hands for protection. They commit themselves unto him, as unto a ouse of defence, to save them. They daily ry unto him to keep them. Their prayer is, Keep me as the apple of the eye: hide me nder the shadow of thy wings." "O keep my oul and deliver me, for I trust in thee." To hem the name of the Lord is a strong tower, nd they run into it and are safe. The Lord lways keeps those who are busily employed in is work. The diligent servant is safe. The bedient child is sure of protection. If we feel at we cannot keep ourselves; if we perceive at we are surrounded by dangers and foes; *we* put ourselves into the hands of God for te tion; if we daily call upon him to keep f *we exercise faith* in his word of promise; if *we are* actively engaged in his service,

ord is thy Keeper."

Lord will keep us. Let us

ant Protector. Believer. "Je-
er." Jehovah, in all his per-
ns, is engaged for thy protec-
th the feet of his saints." He
cheer his weak, fearful, and
with a song. He says, "In
unto her, A vineyard of red
d do keep it; I will water it
est any hurt it, I will keep it
(Isa. xxvii. 2, 3). But *when*
eep us? Always, every mo-
ally in times of peculiar trial.
nearest when most needed;
en he is least perceived.—In
rouble. He does not keep us



and the storm beats more fiercely, and our fears grow stronger, and we tremble and are afraid. he again says, "I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not" (Isa. xli. 13).

From *what* does the Lord keep his people? Not from common calamities. Not from severe afflictions. For they are a poor and an afflicted people. But he keeps them from sinking under their troubles. Good hope makes them buoyant. It keeps the head above water. It points to the rainbow in the clouds. To the distant streak of light, the harbinger of approaching day. The Christian may cry, "I sink in deep waters." But he shall also have to say, "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters." He will keep them from being overcome and conquered by inward corruption. It will work, and work mightily. It will struggle, and struggle like the drowning man. It may for a season bring them into captivity, and cause them to cry out, "I am carnal, sold under sin. Oh, wretched man that I am!" But sin shall not have dominion over them; for they are not under the law, but under grace. He will keep them from going back into the world, and *apostatizing from* the truth. They may be *tempted to it.* They may feel secretly inclined

' *Keeper.*"

:y conclude, under
re apostates. But
yet, who had God
dertake to keep, he

By angelic powers.
g spirits, sent forth
ıall be heirs of sal-
as it was promised
very member. "He
› over thee, to keep
xci. 2). Holy and
:r forget that, under
in this dangerous
o by the indwelling
Spirit. Our bodies



loves and values them. No parent ever loved a child as he loves the meanest of his people. No miser ever valued his gold as he values the poorest of his saints. And then he has pledged himself to do so. He has said, "*I will keep it.*" Besides, he can glorify himself by doing so. Oh, what glory will redound to his holy name, when the complete number of his elect—when every lamb of his fold, shall appear perfect before him in Zion! Not one missing. Not one lost. No; not inconsistent Jonah; nor backsliding Peter; nor even the unaccountable Solomon.

My Christian friend, we shall need keeping in the future; never let us forget this. Let us make sure that the Lord is our keeper. Let us daily seek his keeping; never going out into the world until we have put ourselves into his hand by a solemn act of faith and prayer. Never let us, for one moment, trust to our own vigilance, power, or sagacity; for if we do, we shall certainly fall. Self-dependence always procures a fall. Young Christian, look to Jesus, cleave to Jesus, trust in Jesus, and he will keep thee as a lamb in the fold, as a child in a castle of rocks. Weak Christian, look to [illegible]his when Satan tempts you, when your heart [illegible]misgives you, when fears oppress you, when [illegible]verything appears to run cross and contrary;

"A sovereign Protector I have,
Unseen, yet for ever at hand,
Unchangeably faithful to save,
Almighty to rule and command.

"From evil secure, and its dread,
I rest, if my Saviour is nigh;
And songs his kind presence indeed,
Shall in the night season supply.

"Kind author and ground of my hope,
Thee, thee, for my God I avow,
My glad Ebenezer set up,
And own thou hast helped me till now.

"I muse on the years that are past,
Wherein my defence thou hast proved;
Nor wilt thou relinquish at last,
A sinner so signally loved."

XXXV.

THE SILENT MONITOR.

AS we always need counsel, caution, or admonition, the Lord seems to have placed preachers in every situation, to teach, instruct, and do us good, if we will listen to them. He that is willing to learn will never need an instructor. I have often been struck with the thought, that everything appears to convey a lesson to the docile and spiritual mind. As I was riding to Amersham a short time ago, having never passed that road before, I was engaged in noticing the objects of interest that presented themselves, and observing the number of miles and the mile-stones we passed on the road. At length we came to one mile-stone which seemed to have nothing to communicate, for every letter was effaced. Well, I thought, here is an instructive monitor. This stone does not answer *the design for* which it was placed here, but *it may answer* another. Does it not remind us

First, *Where it stood.* It was in the road, in its proper place. Just so these persons appear to be in the road to heaven, and we hope they are, in one sense, in their proper place. But they make no progress. There they are now just where they were twenty or thirty years ago. When we first knew them, they were just what they now are. They talk just the same. They walk just the same. They have come to a certain point where they made a dead stop, and we have seen no advancement since. They appear to know no more of themselves, no more of Christ, no more of the excellency of real religion, than they did. They are old babes, and need that one teach them again what be the first principles of the doctrine

they *stand*, but they should *move on*, saying to those about them, "Come with us, and we will do you good." Notice,—

Secondly, *What it had been.* It had been once an instructive stone, its characters were plain, and its design evident. Well, so some professors. Years ago we thought we could make them out. It appeared as if the Lord had engraved the engraving that was upon them. We fancied they were the epistles of Christ, written with the finger of the living God. They were not only in their places, but they appeared to be ornaments, and instructive monuments. You might hear them speaking in the Sabbath-school, you might see them distributing the religious tract, you might observe them endeavouring to bring others under the word. But they left off these things by degrees. They appeared to forget the design of their being brought into the Church. They gradually sunk down into a state of selfishness. The letters were by degrees erased, and now there they stand; and if a stranger were to try to discover by them what real religion is, or seek direction from their conduct in the heavenly road, he would seek in vain. Alas, the gold is become dim; the wine is mixed with water. They *are not* what they were once. Notice,—



is this no good. How m
are there in the Church o
are standing idle all th
may toil, but they will n
give, but they will not
Others may mourn over t
but they are not affecte
church lumber, useless m
of the ground. Ah, they
different when I was yo
joined the Church, I did
so! Well, but why not t
different now? Why no
if you used to work onc
to the younger members.
signed your discharge fr

d. It wanted the iron chisel, the heavy
and the mason's strong arm. Many a
ould be necessary before it would appear
l, intelligible mile-stone. And what do
rofessors need? Need! they also need
enewed. They want the power of the
pirit to be put forth in their experience;
ant the hammer of God's Word brought
vith force upon the conscience; and they
me iron dispensation to make them feel
ondition, and engrave them afresh. And
were placed where they are by the Lord's
they will be so dealt with. If gentle
will not do, severe measures will be re-
to. The Lord will melt and try them.
ll turn his hand upon them, and will
ghly purge away their dross, and take
all their sin. Our churches need the
of the Holy Spirit put forth in them.
of our members require to be roughly
d, for they are settled upon their lees.
ay warn them, exhort them, invite them,
n them: but it is like trying to engrave
l hardened mile-stone with a feather.
g short of the power of God will do.
Holy Spirit must come upon us as of old,
re will be no effectual work, no perma-
hange.

XXXVI.

A WORD TO MINISTE

TWENTY GOOD REASONS WHY MINIS
AVOID CONTRACTING DE

BECAUSE God has plai
it in that gospel which
and a minister should
act as to feel at libe
from every plain text in the Ne
even from that which says, "*O*
thing;" which he cannot consis
is in debt.

. it is a violation of

4. Because ministers are to be examples to the flock, which they are to lead in the way of holiness; but if the minister run into debt, how can he reprove, or admonish, or even blame the people, if they follow his example?

5. Because, if he be properly influenced, and practising economy, it is very seldom necessary. What minister can look around and not see some worldly person living upon the same amount of income without involving himself in debt?

6. Because it wounds God's cause, which should be dearer to us than any fleshly indulgence; and opens the mouths of enemies, which we should study to keep shut.

7. Because it lays a stumbling-block in the way of souls who think lightly of our religion, and will not listen to our message on account of it.

8. Because it contradicts our profession; for we all profess to obey the word and imitate the example of him who never contracted a debt, nor sanctioned any one in doing so.

9. Because it is opposed to the duty of self-denial, which we are called upon to practise; very few are the cases of debt which might not have been prevented by scriptural self-denial.

10. Because it furnishes unprincipled persons

th an argumen
ndency to harden them in
11. Because it injures honest tradesm
prevents them keeping the precept which we
are violating.

12. Because it is very generally for some
unnecessary indulgence in dress, furniture, food,
a large dwelling, &c.; for which no minister of
Christ should ever contract a debt.

13. Because it indicates thoughtlessness, im-
providence, or want of principle; whereas
ministers should be thoughtful, prudent, an
unquestionably upright.

14. Because we have no right to expect t
God will work for us in his providence to d
such debts, or to call upon our people to d

Because it has often introduced conf
nd put weapons into the
rewith to acco

and gives Satan an occasion against us, of which he will not be backward to avail himself.

19. Because it mars our usefulness, and cuts off the means of doing good: the godly are wounded, the ungodly are hardened, and we have not to give to him that needeth (Ephes. iv. 28).

20. Because it will throw a gloom around our sick-bed, plant thorns in our dying pillow, and furnish matter for scandal when we are lying in the grave.

Brethren, are these things so? If they are, let us determine in God's strength, that, as his cause is dear unto us, as his name is called upon us, as his gospel is entrusted to our keeping, as our people look to us for an example, as our enemies are watching for an occasion against us, as God has forbidden it, as Satan makes a handle of it, as worldlings are stumbled by it, and as every one of us must give account of himself to God, that, whatever sacrifices we may have to make, whatever self-denial we may have to practise, we will not contract any debts which we cannot discharge when called upon so to do.

XXXVII.

A WORD TO DEACONS AND MEMBERS.

TWENTY GOOD REASONS WHY CHURCHES SHOULD ADEQUATELY SUPPORT, AND DEACONS PROMPTLY AND PUNCTUALLY PAY, THEIR MINISTERS.



ECAUSE, not doing so, they neglect a very solemn and important duty which God requires at their hands; for "so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."

2. Because not doing so shows that they

4. Because, not doing so, the minister cannot discharge his duties, and observe the precepts of God's holy Word.

5. Because not doing so proves that though they profess principles more pure and powerful than those of the world, they are not influenced by them; for many worldly men have too high a sense of honour to engage the services of any one, and then refuse adequately to reward him.

6. Because not doing so leads the pastor to think that his services are undervalued, which depresses his spirits and weakens his energies.

7. Because not doing so hinders him in the study of God's Word, fills his mind with anxiety about worldly things, and often makes his sermons meagre.

8. Because not doing so prevents his procuring proper materials to assist him in his work, as well as harasses and burdens his mind.

9. Because not doing so obliges him to contract debts, and prevents him discharging them at the proper time, which is alike discreditable to him and them.

10. Because not doing so often makes parties in a church; one party sympathizing with the minister, whom they consider to be injured, and the other with some selfish leader who wishes *to keep him poor.*

ation must be.

Because not doing so is treating the
er of Christ worse than a common servant
chanic; whereas Christ has said, "The
er is worthy of his reward;" which
should be just and equal.

Because not doing so betrays a want of
feeling, and leads consistent persons to
on whether such churches can be influ-
by the grace of God and the truth of the

Because not doing so injures the pastor's
ess, and prevents his carrying out his

plans of benevolence for the spread of
el both at home and abroad.
ɔcause, not doing so, the Church loses
ıcter, dishonours the Lord, grieves the
ıirit, and must expect to wither and

ɔcause not doing so troubles a pastor's
flects on the gospel he preaches, and
a sacred principle.
ɔcause not doing so discourages young
talent from entering the ministry, and
ıgs its own punishment with it.
ren, if you love the Saviour who
d the Church with his own blood; if
:e the presence, power, and operations
Holy Spirit; if you value the gospel
, which Christ himself has instituted,
ich is the instrument by which God
works; if you esteem the principles
ou profess, and which bear the divine
pon them; if you would see the Church
and the ministry successful; if you
ee sinners brought to God, and saints
; in his holy name; if you would see
ɔits filled by godly and talented men;
ould obey the precepts of the gospel, or
ıe law the rule of your lives; if you
n the respect of the world around, and

from you, or break his heart;—in one word, if you would be what every deacon and church of Christ ought to be, viz., holy, honest, conscientious, and consistent, then provide your ministers with an HONOURABLE MAINTENANCE; and pay them *promptly*, *regularly*, and *cheerfully* what you raise for them.

"Who can a pastor's heart express,
The unutterable tenderness;
Beyond what fondest mothers prove
The yearning pangs of softest love?

'He only comprehends, who knows
Whence every grace and blessing flows;
Who feels, but never can explain,
The bowels of the Son of man."

XXXVIII.

THE POOR MAN'S COURSE AND COMFORT.

IT is no uncommon thing for a poor man to be in trouble, for man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. The single man has some troubles, the married often more. Want of work, want of health, want of skill, want of proper remuneration for his work,—all these are at times sources of trouble. Hard times, hard masters, hard work, hard speeches,—these also add to his troubles. There is trouble at the factory, trouble at the mill, trouble in the shop, and trouble in the field. Some troubles come from God, but more are the consequence *of* our own folly. However, trouble is trouble, *co*me from what cause or quarter it may; and *th*e great thing is to know what to do with it, and how to get rid of it.

Well, we are going to look at a poor man in *trouble*, to point out what he did with his

s record is in God's book. ...
oor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and
ved him out of all his troubles" (Ps. xxxiv. 6).
o doubt but he had temporal troubles, perhaps
st such as yours. A large family and a small
ncome; hard work and a weak body; little
mployment and many demands. Providence
seemed to frown upon him, and many things to
go wrong with him. Then he had spiritual
troubles. A hard heart, a bad memory, a bit-
ter enemy, many fears, distressing doubts, per-
plexing cogitations, and violent temptations,
separate or combined, at times troubled him.
God hid his face; unbelief gained strength;
Satan suggested hard thoughts; his own heart
misgave him; he looked back with regret, and
... with foreboding; he looked within with

lid not give way to despondency. What
he?
He cried unto the Lord." This was the very
, the wisest thing he could do. Had he
l to creatures, they might have been desti-
of sympathy, or unable or unwilling to help.
cried unto the Lord, his father's God and
own God; unto the Lord, who is full of
, plenteous in mercy, and pledged to answer
er; to the Lord, who is accessible at all
s and in all places, who never said to the
of Jacob, "Seek ye me," in vain; to the
l, who had heard millions of poor souls in
ble, and had never refused to deliver one;
ıe Lord, who sent or permitted the trouble,
ırnish him with a message, give him an
sion, and compel him to apply at his throne.
cried unto the Lord; he cried from his
't, he cried with his voice; his prayer was
ole, earnest, importunate, and therefore suc-
ful. He carried his trouble to the Lord,
old his heavenly Father all about it, and he
it at his throne. He went with all his
s, cares, and sorrows; he opened his heart,
nburdoned his soul, he relieved his mind.
ried as one in distress; he cried to One
ould *help*; he cried as one who hoped to
ard and answered. He went again, and

spiritual or temporal, or both
Lord. Do as this poor man
before you as an example.
written on purpose to encour
direct you. Say not that you
to do. Cry unto the Lord. S
know not what will be the end.
Lord, and he will deliver you
troubles. You have a friend
hand. Jesus is there. He know
is. He knows what are the eff
on the soul, the spirits, and the
He has been tried like you are
our High P

liverer, a present God; and prayer brought the power, wisdom, and presence of God to bear upon the poor man's circumstances, and he was saved out of all his troubles. God loves to save us from our troubles as well as our sins. He saved Israel from Egypt, David from all his foes, Jeremiah from the dungeon; he is saving many from trouble now, and he will save us. Many are this day singing their songs of deliverance, to the praise of his glorious grace; and he is saying to us, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver *thee*, and *thou* shalt glorify *me*." Let us not, then, nurse our troubles, encourage our fears, or give way to our foes; but let us go to our God by prayer; let us go in faith; and let us expect that as this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles, so he will hear, appear for, and deliver us. We have the same promises as he had; our claim upon God is as good as his was; and we have more to plead than he could have, for we have the dear name, precious blood, finished work, and constant intercession of Jesus, the High Priest of our profession.

Poor, tried, tempted, troubled, tempest-tossed soul, look up; yield no longer to thy fears; *listen no longer* to Satan, that enemy to God

XXXIX.

THE FEAR OF DE

"And deliver them who through fea
their lifetime subject to bondage.



HERE is always son
and generally some
in death. We can
is the effect of sin;
of our nature. All the circumst
with it are painful and trying, a
seen, the unknown, the eternal
When we reflect on these thin
will arise, "If I am deceived!
wrong! If I should find out

forward to their departure from this world without gloom; it embitters life, and renders the idea of death dreadful. This is wrong, decidedly wrong. We should look from death to Jesus, and never look at death but through Jesus. He has conquered death for us, and has deprived the monster of his sting. Nothing can make death dreadful but sin; and if sin is pardoned, even that cannot. But if we believe in Jesus, if we have committed our souls to him, if we are living to promote his glory, our sins are most certainly pardoned. God has blotted them out in the blood of his dear Son, and he assures us that they shall never be mentioned against us. We have his word for our security, and he has added his oath, that we might have strong consolation. We should trust in God's faithful word, and do honour to the blood of Jesus by believing that it will save us from all condemnation.

"But my faith is weak." So it may be; and yet weak faith will lay hold on an omnipotent Saviour, and bring everlasting salvation to the soul. "But my fears are strong." Yes; and so they will be so long as you nurse them, and look at yourself or at death, instead of looking to Jesus. "But I find it so hard to believe." *So it is while* we attempt it in our own strength;

od—this will prove your ...
our deliverance. Hear what your Saviour
ys: "Shall not God avenge his own elect,
hich cry day and night unto him, though he
ear long with them? I tell you that he will
venge them speedily" (Luke xviii. 7, 8). That
rouble will never hurt you that leads you to
he Lord; the pain it causes is salutary, and
he energy it awakens does you credit. Carry
ll your troubles to your God, plead with him
o sanctify them to you, and then remove them
from you; but seek their sanctification first,
and let their removal be a secondary considera-
tion. Be jealous lest you should lose the bene-
fit of an affliction, for no trouble is sent but
with a special object in view; and if the present
trouble does not accomplish that object, another

Father, the Lord Jesus is his Advocate, the Holy Spirit is his Guide, and heaven is his Father's house and his home. God is always, and everywhere, his Father; no matter, therefore, whether in the body or out of it, whether in this world or another, he is safe; death cannot affect his state—it can make no alteration in the relationship. Believe, then, in Jesus, look to Jesus, place your entire dependence on Jesus, and never trouble about death until it comes. It is no business of yours to-day; it belongs to to-morrow; and when death comes, Jesus will come with it, and he will give you grace to die as a Christian, as he has given you grace to live like one.

But some, from the weakness of the nerves, or a naturally melancholy temperament, or from bad training, are always in bondage from the fear of death. Some fear dying, and some fear the consequences of death. They never look forward but with gloom—thus making themselves sad and all about them. Now, such seldom fear death when it comes; it is never found to be what they feared. The fear of death is gone before they come to it, and the dreaded act of dying is comparatively easy. I have *often* known this to be true, and my *friend Mrs. Chin*, who was lately called home



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or assured her that at ev
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prayer that I could offer, w
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at last? A letter from her
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aster of his sting. Nothing can make
dreadful but sin; and if sin is pardoned,
hat cannot. But if we believe in Jesus,
ave committed our souls to him, if we
ing to promote his glory, our sins are
rtainly pardoned. God has blotted them
he blood of his dear Son, and he assures
they shall never be mentioned against
have his word for our security, and he
d his oath, that we might have strong
on. We should trust in God's faithful
d do honour to the blood of Jesus by
that it will save us from all con-
n.



It will open the cage ... and enjoy its native element. ... every fetter, bring you out of clay, and introduce you to the ... King eternal, immortal, invisib ... God." Though your faith be ... you with the Saviour, it prese ... the terrible consequences of d ... you to everlasting life. If ... without Christ, death will ne ... separate you from Christ. ... here, and long to enjoy his ... smile, you will rise to see Cl ... so be for ever with him. Le ... you; you will not find it wh ... not be when near what it s ... The grace that sus

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... his Guide, and heaven is hi
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Jesus, place your entire dependence on
and never trouble about death until it
It is no business of yours to-day; it
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ly a deep sigh would say, "I am in
e still." Nothing that I could say, no
that I could offer, would give her more
ansient relief. But how was it with her
? A letter from her daughter, in whose
she died, which now lies before me, says:
*fear of death had been removed from her
for some time past, and she longed,*" as she
TO GO HOME." Often and often had I
r that this would be the case, but she

for God to lie, or to prove unfaithful. His throne is not more stable than his promise. Let us therefore believe the Word, seek the blessings, and expect the favours. He has promised us wisdom, to understand our way; strength, to prosecute our journey; grace, to subdue our iniquities; pardon, to pacify our consciences; righteousness, to justify our persons; an answer to all our prayers; and a supply of every want. Let us therefore enter upon the new year taking up the promises afresh, and exercising faith in the Almighty and never-changing Promiser. And in the prospect of the arduous duties, painful trials, determined foes, and bright prospects which are before us, say, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only" (Ps. lxxi. 16). Shall we not begin this year also in,—

Penitence? How many sins we have committed! How many duties we have neglected! How many opportunities for usefulness we have lost! What evil tempers we have displayed! What fearful corruptions still work in our hearts! Let us look to the crucified One, who has borne the punishment of our sins in his own body on the tree, and let us mourn as one *mourneth for* his only son, and be in bitterness

ances of [illegible]
life. If you cannot
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o enjoy his presence and his
se to see Christ in glory, and
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en, and will make you more than
over death, through Jesus who
u. Jesus, who died for you, will
u when you are dying, and will
glorious and eternal victory over

O God of love, with cheering ray
Gild my expiring streak of day;

want. He waits to be gracious unto us. He has promised that he will not turn a deaf ear to our prayers. But we *must* feel our need. We *must* realize our dependence. We *must* pray in earnest. We *must* ask as if we meant it. Cold prayers will not do. Formal devotion cannot be acceptable. We must *stir up ourselves* to call upon God. Let us fix times for special prayer, and keep them. Let us select subjects for prayer, and stick to them. Let us feel our dependance upon the Holy Spirit as the author of prayer, and seek his direct and powerful operations. Our heavenly Father is saying, "Call upon me, and I will show thee great and mighty things." Our exalted Redeemer is saying, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, *I will do it.*" The Holy Spirit is saying, "The fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man *availeth much.*" Let us believe in the efficiency of prayer. Let us try and prove the power of prayer. Let us mix faith and hope with every prayer we present. Let us begin the year by renewing our,—

Consecration. Let us, with deep devotion, listen to the apostle, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable *unto God, which* is your reasonable service."



... ... of. Let us reti
selves before the cross, im
eye of God; and there le
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there let us *consecrate* the
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bought with a price, and shoul
God in our bodies and spirit
(1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). We are
but the ...

every moment exposed to danger. Let us watch against our foes. Let us watch the intimations of our Lord's will. Let us be sincere, devotional, active, diligent, peaceable, and upright before God and man. If we believe, faith will keep us steady; if we repent, penitence will make us humble; if we pray, prayer will ensure us supplies; if we consecrate afresh all our energies to the Lord, consecration will preserve us from a worldly spirit; and if we are watchful, we shall escape many temptations and snares which overtake and overcome the heedless and unwary.

Beloved, may this year bring you much grace from God; may you live and walk in close and holy fellowship with God; may you be entirely devoted, and bring great glory, to God; and if death should overtake you, may an abundant entrance be administered unto you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost (Rom. xv. 13).

XLI.

AN APOSTOLIC REQUI

"Ye ought to be teachers."—H

MANY persons are not w
to be, either in state
or practice. Some
therefore we cannot
improve; others admit it, but
effort to alter it, and consequen
better for the admission. Tr
through human instrumentali
spread of truth Christ is to l
sinners converted, and God gl

Some of you ought *to be qualified to teach* who are not. You have long professed Christ. You have had plenty of means at hand. You have had time to spare for other pursuits. Others, with no more means, with no more time, are qualified, and why should not you be? Are you so very dull? Is it so very difficult for you to acquire knowledge, or to acquire the ability to communicate what you know? Or rather, is it not the love of ease, the indulgence of the flesh, and the prevalence of a selfish disposition, that has prevented you? You ought to be teachers, because you might have been qualified to teach. *Why are you not?* Let conscience answer this question as before God, and in the light of eternity.

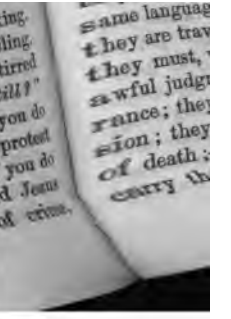
You ought *to be willing to teach.* Many have the ability, but they have not the will. They are educated; they profess Christ; they are members of the Church; they are respectable in society; they have a good degree of influence; but they are not teachers. Why? Ah! why? The Lord Jesus has commissioned his Church *to go and teach the nations.* The commission is to the whole Church, and applies to every member, according to his station, talent, and ability. *Every Christian should teach.* You are entrusted with *the truth* to preserve it, to

ought to teach it; why do you not? Because you want the will. There are persons ignorant of the truth to whom you could communicate it. They cannot be sanctified or saved without it. If they live and die ignorant of it, *are you guiltless? Can you be guiltless?* You ought to be a teacher. By your daily conduct, by your general conversation, by your special efforts, you ought to teach. And you ought to hold yourself responsible, up to a certain point, for the ignorance that is in the world. Does not the apostle teach this when he says, "*Some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame*"? (1 Cor. xv. 34).

You ought to *be anxious to teach.* Not, perhaps, in the pulpit; you may not be qualified for that. Not to teach your pastor or the aged

consistent member of the Church, and not be anxious to add to its numbers? How can you be a patriot, and not be anxious to instruct your fellow-countrymen in the things which belong to their peace? How can you *observe the law*, which says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and not be anxious to lead your neighbour in the good and the right way? How can you *obey the gospel*, which says, "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled," "Preach the gospel to every creature," if you are not anxious, by teaching, to bring every soul under its influence? If you are not anxious to teach, there is something radically wrong; and if you are anxious to teach, you will seek qualifications, grace, and opportunity to do so.

You ought *to be employed in teaching*. There need not be a child in Great Britain uneducated, or a person left without an acquaintance with the gospel, if the members of the Church of Christ would only do their duty. We ought seriously to think of this; and *I am sure*, that the more seriously we think of it, and the more closely we examine it, the more thoroughly shall we be convinced of its truth. Why are children left in ignorance, or handed over to *the teaching of* Puseyites and Papists, or persons



ignorance, or cruelty, if you are not teachers, and if you are not teaching. Teach, then, "every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord" (Heb. viii. 11).

Teachers are wanted in many of our Sunday schools, and you *could* teach, but *will not*. What shall we say to you? Rather, what will your Lord say? Teachers are wanted in many of our villages; and perhaps you could speak of Jesus acceptably, if you would try, but you will not, and what shall we say? Teachers are wanted in the cottages, cellars, garrets, and other residences, in the courts, lanes, alleys, and streets of our towns, and you could gain access to them, and set Christ before them, if you would, but you will not, and what shall we say? Shall we not say that you are verily guilty concerning your brothers. They are bone of your bone; they are flesh of your flesh; they inhabit the same place; they speak the same language; they need the same Saviour; they are travelling to the same dread eternity; they must, with you, appear before the same awful judgment-seat; they are in gross ignorance; they are labouring under a fearful delusion; they sit in darkness and in the shadow of death;—you could visit them; you could *carry the light* of the gospel to them; you

" You ought to be teachers." You have bee
ng enough in the Church; you know mo
han thousands around you; many wou
illingly be taught by you; God in his Wo
ommands you; and the Holy Spirit wou
ork by you. Awake, then, and arise, a
o to work in right earnest. Infidels are
arnest spreading infidelity. Jesuits are
arnest spreading Popery. Puseyites are
arnest spreading Puseyism. The devil is
arnest ruining immortal souls. All appe
n earnest but the Church of Christ. All a
ctive but those who should be. Let u
rethren, cast away the works of darkness, a
et us put on the armour of light. Let
rucify the flesh with its affections and lus
et us begin to work for God as we nev
egan before. Let us go right up to the cro
nd there entirely and for ever consecrate ou
lves to God. Let us draw near to the throu

service in the cause of God. Let us begin teaching in every way, up to the extent of our power, saying, by our conduct, if any perish in ignorance, it shall not be my fault. Let tracts be circulated by thousands; but let not the tract be a substitute for the living voice, but let the tongue, the hand, the pen, the press, the purse, the head, the heart—let all work, and all work together; and then, when our sincerity, perseverance, and purity of motive have been tried, great and glorious results will follow. Churches of Jesus, awake, arise, and teach! Believers in the Son of God, go forth, everywhere preaching the word! Trust alone in the sacrifice of Jesus, exercise confidence in God, invoke the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and yet work as if all depended on your working, and a glorious revival will soon be realized and enjoyed.

XLII.

SAUL'S QUESTION IMPROVED

"What have we?"—1 Sam. ix. 7.

THUS inquired Saul, when al present himself before Sam whom it was customary to i present; and thus ought we quire, who are about to appear before just tribunal. We are summoned, must obey. The warrant is ready, and is wanting but for the date of the da

will by
or acquit the guilty. If any
is chargeable upon us, he will not
us. He cannot consistently with his
rd. One sin will sink us to the depths

We must be righteous, or we shall be
ned. We must present to divine jus-
that the law requires, or we are eter-
ndone. Have we, then, such a righte-
? If so, how did we come by it? We
ot produce it, for our hearts are both
nd weak. Whatever comes from the
rwers to the nature of the heart from
comes. Now, our hearts are deceitful
things, and desperately wicked. Who,
bring a perfect righteousness out of
lluted heart? Not one. Not one of
by nature is

possibility of this? Yes, there is. devised a way, and the gospel reve way in which he can be just, and yet fier of any sinner who believes in Je could not produce the righteousness but Jesus could, and has done so. His *unto death* was in the sinner's stead. H ousness was wrought as the sinner's s and it was accepted by the Judge of a now called "the righteousness of Go gift of righteousness," "the righteousne is by faith." The gospel presents it t faith receives and appropriates it. It to the account of

...y ..., for the one woul
is without the other. If justified
d be incapable of enjoying spiritual thi
is the sick man, confined to his bed
se, is incapable of enjoying natural thi
notified, we should have no title to life
avenly enjoyments, but should be like
by man, who stands charged with ma
s, and is consequently confined in a pris
aded with irons. We must be born aga
power of the Holy Spirit. The hea
e turned against sin. The soul must l
l to God's image. Holiness must becom
nent, our delight, and our health. W
ave a new nature, a new heart, a ne
ion; for without this we have no re
We have nothing at

eace. "Blessed are *the pure in* shall see God." Have we holi- hate sin? mourn over sin? watch humbly confess sin? loathe our- ount of sin? and feel at times as not bear, or have patience with n account of sin? do we pray for ily, heartily, in downright earnest? Spirit of God, as the Spirit of holi- ls in us. If we have the righteous- esus upon us, and the spirit of holi- hin us, then we may go before God little fear as Saul appeared before and he will inform us of a kingdom, fer on us a crown far superior to that Saul possessed or Samuel made known.

"Come quickly, Lord—the veil remove!
as a God of pardoning love
ed eyes:

[redacted] he appeals to Jonathan, and asks the king's son, "What have I done?" In David's case there was good reason for this; but there is a class of sinners, who, when the threatenings of God are set before them, when they are told that their present course will terminate in hell, with a good deal of self-sufficiency ask, "What have I done? what that is so very bad? what that can provoke a good and gracious God? what that can deserve so dreadful a doom? HELL! ETERNAL TORMENTS! ME BE SENT TO HELL! What! one who has lived a moral life; one who has been strictly honest; one who has attended his place of worship regularly; one who has said his prayers with a good deal of punctuality—*me go to hell!* who, then, can go *to heaven?* What have I done?"



quires you to be holy,
requires that you should a
glory in everything you d
never be your end in any o
motives, thoughts, purpose
actions should be all for G
must be no lust, covetou
evil speaking, or irregulari
or conduct; all must be by
taneously from nature, or
was created capable of thi
quires it at our hands. If
God is insulted, punishme
the sinner is doomed to r
Thus the law teaches us
demands exact conformity
threatens with eternal death

rejected God's message of mercy sent to you in the everlasting gospel. The gospel comes to you as a sinner; it comes to you direct from the heart of God; it comes to you in a state of condemnation. It comes to tell you that there is mercy in God's heart; that he finds no pleasure in punishing sinners; that he has devised a way by which sinners may be saved—a way in which the law will get all its due, and the law-breakers be delivered from its tremendous sentence. It comes to tell you that God has given his own, his only Son, to be a substitute and sacrifice for sinners; that he has lived to obey the precepts of the law, and died to pay its awful penalty; that he is both able and willing to save all that come unto God by him; that he simply requires you to believe his message, trust in his atonement, confess your crimes, and consecrate yourself to his service. In so doing he pledges his word and honour to save you; to deliver you from hell with all its horrors, from sin with all its consequences, and to reconcile you to his Father, entitle you to heaven, and prepare you to shine among the ranks of the blessed ones above.

Now, have you received this gospel into your heart? have you believed it? have you acted *upon it?* Do you renounce all other grounds

[redacted] you confess them before God with grief? do you break off from your old habits, associates, and courses, and consecrate yourself to the service and honour of Jesus? If not, it is in vain for you to ask, "What have I done?" or, "Why should I go to hell?" Why, you have not only broken God's law, but you have refused a pardon from his grace! God has sent you a pardon, which was procured at no less a cost than the labour, sufferings, and death of his dear Son, and you have refused it. You will not believe the message; you would not accept the blessing. God told you that you must believe in Jesus, live upon Jesus, be made one with Jesus, or be damned; but you would not believe him, for you have encouraged a hope of going to heaven in [illegible]

the very brink of hell, and yet you do not ieve it. The blue flames of the eternal pit nost flash in your face, and yet you cry peace, ace. The Lord arouse you from your fearful te.

"O Thou that dost in secret see,
Regard a dying sinner's prayer;
Out of the deep I cry to thee—
Save, or I perish in despair.

"Weeping to thee I lift mine eyes,
Mine eyes which fail with looking up;
For thee my heart laments and sighs,
Sick with desire and lingering hope.

"Oh, that I could but surely know
If I at last shall mercy find!
For what am I reserved below?
Tell me, thou Saviour of mankind!

"Let others walk with thee in light,
But bless me with one parting ray;
And e'er I close mine eyes in night,
Give me to see thy perfect day."

XLIV.

PETER'S QUESTION IMPROVED.

"To whom shall we go?"—JOHN vi. 68.



HAT do you want? If you want life, or peace, or holiness, or happiness, or eternal salvation, you are shut up to one, even to Jesus. It is of use going to any one else. Hence Peter erwards said, "Neither is there salvation in y other: for there is none other name under ven given among men, whereby we must saved" (Acts iv. 12). All depends on



by the sacraments, by the Virgin, or by the Church; salvation is of the Lord.

"But if we are willing to go to Jesus, how must we go?" Just as you are. Without any preparation. Without any price in your hand. Without any recommendation. Your sinfulness, your misery, your need of him, are recommendation enough. You need no other. He requires no other. Believe what is said of him in his holy word. Call upon him in your own simple language. Cast your soul into his hands. Place implicit confidence in his truthfulness. Expect salvation through what he has done and suffered *alone*. In so doing you are made for eternity. Salvation is yours. You are at peace with God. You are justified before God. The Most High is your Father, and if you were to die the next moment, heaven is your home. Whatever you want, *go* to Jesus for it, for he has it to bestow. Whatever you fear, go to Jesus with it, for he can deliver you from it. Going to Jesus for [illegible] and with all, is living a life of faith upon [illegible] Son of God. You cannot go to him too [illegible]*n*, or for too much. He loves to see you [illegible]*e*. He rejoices to hear you ask. He waits [illegible]*or* [illegible]fer blessings upon you. Let not your *discourage you*. Let not Satan keep you

"*To whom shall I go?*" but Jesus. No one can meet my case but Jesus. He says, "Come unto me." He solemnly assures me, that he will not cast me out. I will therefore go to him. I will call upon him. I will wait before him. I will hope to be saved by him. I will cry until he answers me. I will give him no rest until he says unto my soul, "I am thy salvation." Thus acting, you are sure to succeed. Salvation in your case is as certain as though you possessed and enjoyed it. Therefore fear not: he may delay to answer you for a time, but he will not refuse to confer the blessing upon you. Therefore the prophet said, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." "The Lord is

XLV.

THE JAILOR'S QUESTION IMPROVED.

"What must I do to be saved?"—Acts xvi. 30.

ALL men by nature are asleep in sin. They manifest an awful indifference about the state of their souls. They go on in darkness. Therefore anything that arouses them, and leads them to think, is likely to be beneficial. The jailor, I suppose, had heard of Christ. He may have heard Paul and Silas preach. But he was careless of his own soul, and cruel to those committed to his custody. Therefore he thrust Paul and Silas into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. But the earthquake aroused him. The fear of his prisoners escaping filled him with fear. The Holy Spirit set his iniquities before him. He felt deep conviction of sin. He was concerned to escape, not merely from the wrath of men, but from the wrath of God. He saw his danger. He dreaded his doom. He looked out for a

way of escape. He crie
now appeared to him in a new
what must I do to be saved?"
No question can be more important. It i
just the question that every one of us should
propose. We *need* salvation. We *may* h
saved. But *how?* What must we do? Ho
can we escape our deserved doom? Th
answer given was most simple. No ceremonie
were proposed. No human priest was exalte
No system or body called "the Church" w
pointed out. No; it was simply, "Believe
the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt
saved." Receive into your mind the test
concerning Jesus. Give credit to the test
Place your confidence in the
work of Christ. Comm
hands. He
you.

you will be conducted. He will undertake to save you, and to present you faultless before the face of his Father, with exceeding joy. No penances, no pilgrimages, no prayers to the Virgin or the saints, will be required. He will save you himself, without any assistance. He will save you without money or price, or anything that will answer to, or may be represented by, such words. Commit the soul to Christ, exercise confidence in Christ, expect to be saved alone by Christ, and salvation is infallibly certain.

No duties, no observances, are required as pre-requisites to salvation. We must be saved by free grace first, and then perform duties, and attend to religious observances, in order that we may glorify God for his mercy to us. Faith is the first thing that God requires of us, and "without faith it is impossible to please him." No prayer we can offer, no tears we may shed, no duties we may perform, no ordinances we observe, can please God, until we believe in Jesus. Faith in Christ, or giving credit to the gospel and relying on what Jesus did and suffered, should go before prayer and every other religious exercise; nor can anything we do *please* him until we believe. *This is the plain* unvarnished declaration of

practical religion comparatively e
common mistake is, that we must
repentance, or a spirit of prayer, or
Saviour, or perform certain religio
and *then* exercise confidence in Ch
is just reversing God's order, and
thing keeps multitudes in bondage,
and distress. Believe and be saved
by believing, and then go to wo
salvation by simple faith in Christ
you will find liberty in prayer, powe
pleasure in duties, and fellowship
his own ordinances.

Reader, as a sinner, you are
danger as the jailor was. Do y
Have you been alarmed at it?

to baptism, some to the law—some to one
; and some to another; but the gospel
s you *directly to Christ.* Some will say
it—some, pray—some, do penance—some,
lo do your best, and expect Christ in
y to do the rest; but the gospel says,
LIEVE, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;*"
without asking *who* you are, or *what* you
assures you, in most plain and positive
s, that "*you shall be saved.*" Do you
t? Do you ask, "How may I know
h is the right way?" Put the matter out
ubt by putting it to the proof. Do you
"How shall I go to Jesus?" Go as we
gone before you, saying,—

"Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.

'Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!"

TWO QUESTIONS TO Y(

"He is of age; ask him."—JOHN



URIOSITY is fond of c
But the curious often
wrong quarter with thei
It is often best to refer a
to the parties about whom they
especially when they are of age.
questions which we wish to put to
readers; and as they are of age,
go to others, but come directly to
and ask.—

even a sinner may be made happy; because his crimes may be forgiven, and his disease may be cured. There is not one person that reads these lines but may be happy; and if each person is not happy, the cause is to be found in himself. It is not in your circumstances; for many have been happy circumstanced, just as you are. Many are now happy, though surrounded by as many things to make them unhappy. Happiness stands in the favour and enjoyment of God. We must be reconciled to him, be pardoned by him, be accepted of him, and be satisfied with him, or we can never be happy. If God is our Father, if Jesus is our Saviour, if the Holy Spirit is our Comforter, we may, we ought to be happy. But if this is not the case, it may be; it may be this very day. God calls you out of the world; he bids you come to him in the name of Jesus; he directs you to confess your sins; and he promises to receive you, to pardon you, and to be a Father unto you. Jesus is willing and waiting to save you. Are you burdened and weary? He says, "Come, and I will give you rest." Are you thirsting for holiness, comfort, and peace? He says, "Come unto me and drink." The Holy *Spirit is* promised to every one that *asketh, and* to you if you really desire him



with God. Can I
this unpleasant? Is it b
not concern you? Is it
Have you sought to be re
sought it in God's way
made the attempt, and fa
the first. But why are
Just inquire honestly and
into the cause, and examir
will not find the cause in
it in yourself. You are
because you do not wish
willing to be so. If you
would seek it. If you so

your death. He does not delight to punish his foes, but he does delight to show mercy unto them, and does so in every case where they seek it. Now, suppose — though the Lord forbid it—but suppose you go to hell, and some one asks you there, "*Why are you damned?*" the only answer you will be able to give will be, "*Because I would not be saved.*" Or one asks you, "*Why did you come to this place of torment?*" Your only reply, if you speak truth, will be, "*Because I refused to go to heaven.*" Is not this awful? Will not such reflections in hell be unspeakably dreadful? Oh, flee, flee I beseech you, from the wrath to come! Flee, flee to Jesus, and happiness and heaven are your own. Flee, flee this moment, for the next may be too late.

XLVII.

PROCRASTINATION.

"Go thy way for this time."—Acts xxiv. 25.

PAUL was now before Felix. The mysterious providence of God had brought these two remarkable persons together: the interview was a very solemn one; it will never be forgotten; it has done great good; it will do more. Here are two great parties. They still exist; for though Paul and Felix have long since been parties they represented still survive. They will read the

see him converted at that moment, before he left him. He aimed at this. He longed for this. Reader, this is just what we want. When we preach the gospel, we want to save souls —every soul that hears us. When we write and print these short pieces that you may read them, we aim at the salvation of your soul. Nothing less than this will satisfy us. We cannot consent that you should live in rebellion against God another hour. We cannot agree that you should remain unpardoned five minutes more. We want you to be saved, and to be saved at this moment. Oh, that you were as desirous of being saved as we are desirous that you should be! Then you would yield your heart to God instantly. Then you would accept God's gracious invitation without delay. Then this would be the happiest, the most memorable day in your life. Then there would be extraordinary joy in heaven, for angels— those holy and benevolent beings who have watched you while in your course of sin and folly—would rejoice in the presence of God over your repentance. Then there would be new joy on earth as soon as it was known, for every believer who heard of it would glorify God on your behalf.

Here is Felix listening to the servant of



matter. He thought
convenient time, but
Felix has had nearly
to rue his folly in hel
this moment, and he
Many have imitated l
doing so now. They
"*Go thy way for this*
sin. It is my element
cannot give it up just
glass, the jovial party
present world,—these
I am not prepared to
embrace the gospel you
I had rather remain as
longer. I do not wish

ear to the message of mercy, and thus judge, or pronounce yourself unworthy of everlasting life? Will you persevere in sin until you lie down in black despair? Will you go to hell close by the gates of heaven? Will you perish in your own deceivings? Have you no fear of God? Have you no dread of eternal torments? Have you no wish to escape from the wrath to come? What will you do in the day of visitation, when death arrests you, when Satan seizes you, when the just Judge passes sentence upon you, when hell moves itself to meet you at your coming, and when the gates of the infernal pit close upon you for ever? What *will* you do? What *can* you do? To *whom* will you flee for help? How *will* you, how *can* you escape? Alas! escape then will be impossible! "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." Then the door of hope will be shut. Then the way of escape will be closed. Then the Son of God will have risen up from the throne of grace, and prepared his throne for judgment. Say not, then, "Go thy way for this time;" but rather say, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; I will seek the Lord while he may be found; I will call upon him while he is near." *Surrender the* citadel of thy heart at once.

Receive Christ this [illegible]
and be saved instantly. [illegible]
in his blood, even the forgiveness of [illegible]
is mercy with him that he may be feared.
There is salvation of free and sovereign grace;
and whosoever will may come and take it
freely.

Reader, you will either receive or reject it:
you will either embrace Christ, or say, "G
thy way for this time." Which will it b
Ah, which?

"Hasten, O sinner, *to be wise*,
And stay not for the morrow's sun;
The longer wisdom you despise,
The harder is she to be won.

"Oh, hasten *mercy to implore*,
And stay not for the morrow's su
And fear thy season should be o'
[illegible] evening's stage be r
[illegible]

XLVIII.

THE FIRST DAY OF THE FIRST MONTH.

WHAT a mercy that we have been spared until now. How many have been cut down during the last year. We might have begun this year in hell. Oh, if we had! How dreadful the thought! But many who began the last year as we begin this are in hell now. They little thought that it would be so, but there they are; and now there is no redemption, there is no way of escape. They are shut up in hopeless despair. Their doom is for ever fixed. And why are we spared? To go on in sin? To abuse the mercy that has been shown to us? To aggravate our woe? Oh no! We are spared that we may escape from the wrath to come, that we may secure the pardon of our sins, and that we may be happy both in this world and in that which is to come.

This is the first day of the first month, and

what is our first thoug... Let u...
our thoughts upon? let us think o...
mercies and past sins; let us think
danger and present duty; let us think
future probabilities and certainties. Let us
think of our state—what is it? Are we par-
doned, or condemned? Are we children of
wrath, or sons of God? Are we reconciled
God, or living at enmity with God? Do
ever *speak* to him in prayer, *look* to him
faith, *walk* with him in love, *work* for him
pleasure, or *long* to be with him in glory?
cannot be in friendship with God if we
What is our first *desire* to-day? Is
made holy, to be conformed to the
Christ, and to be used to the glory
... desire grace from God to ma...
... desire to possess unc...
born of God.
... appr...

a New Year's gift? If so, what shall we ask for? Reader, think; what would you wish God to give you to begin this year with? Let us ask for faith, that we may believe his word; for repentance, that we may be sorry for our sins; for love, that we may cleave to Jesus; for zeal, that we may work in God's cause; and for thorough consecration to God, that there may be no mistake about our character or destination.

What shall be our first *effort?* Shall it be to secure our own salvation, and enjoy the knowledge of it in our own souls; thus securing all temporal good, and escaping all spiritual evil? Let us hear and attend to the admonition of the Saviour, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these [temporal good things] shall be added unto you." Let us regard the Saviour's direction: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you." A kingdom may be won; shall we win it? Bread for the soul may be obtained, shall we obtain it?

What shall be our first *aim?* On what shall we fix the *eye*, the heart, at the beginning of *this year?* Shall it be on something temporal,

or on spiritual blessings ! To gr... great, or to be good? To be... honour God? To live like the beasts... perish, or as immortal, intelligent, and account... able creatures? Dear friends, let us aim high. Let us aim *to be* all that God is willing to make us, to *obtain* all that God has promised to give us, and to *enjoy* all that God has engaged to confer on those that seek him. Let us aim all we do to get near to God, to be made Jesus, to prepare for eternal glory, and to... all about us as happy as we can.

Remember, this may be our last year sentence may have gone forth, "*This* ... *shalt die.*" Let us therefore be ready. ...*ake sure* that we are in Christ, th... ...rkmanship created anew ... is in us the ho... temples

XLIX.

THE PRAYER OF FAITH.

"All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.—MATT. xxi. 22.

SOME have supposed that this promise is to be confined to miracles; but this is a mistake. It is as much intended for us as it was for the first disciples. Look at the parallel passage in Mark xi. 22–26. Jesus directs his disciples to exercise "faith in God," assures them that the prayer of faith shall be answered, and requires them to exercise a forgiving spirit, as they would hope to be forgiven; which is as much binding on us as on them. He says, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But *if ye do not* forgive, neither will your *Father which is* in heaven forgive your tres-

passes." Look also at ... "Ask, ...
delivers a parable to show the pe... seek, and ye s...
tunate prayer, and then says, "...
shall be given unto you; knock, and it shall be opened," &c. Here
find; knock, and it shall be opened," &c. Here
he positively promises that every one that
heartily asks, honestly seeks, and importunately
knocks shall be attended to; but faith is su...
posed, and is necessary to such asking, seeki...
and knocking. Once more, look at Jam...
5–7. "If any of you lack wisdom, let
ask of God, that giveth to all men lib...
and upbraideth not and it shall be giv...
But let him ask in faith, nothing w...
For he that wavereth is like a wave o...
driven with the wind and tossed.
think that he shall receiv...
Here, you see, faith
are told



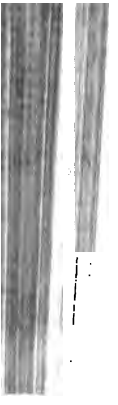
and is a rewarder of them that diligently
k him. That he is united to Christ, and
les in fellowship with Christ, as it is written,
' ye abide in me, and my words abide in you,
shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done
o you" (John xv. 7). Also, that his heart
st against all sin; for if one sin is indulged,
ne idol is spared, God is dishonoured and
voked to jealousy; and it is not to be ex-
ted that he will indulge those who violate
commands and encourage his foes. Hence
Psalmist, in so many words, says, "If I re-
iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not
me" (Ps. lxvi. 18). But if we believe
d as revealed in Jesus—if we are united
ist and abide in communion with him—
hearts are weaned from, and set against,
—we are prepared to pray in all faith.
der to exercise faith in prayer, we must
ay for what we really want. God has
d to supply our necessities, but not to
our fancies. If we *want* what we ask
we shall not talk before him, or offer
nts to him, but we shall heartily plead
Or we must heartily desire the
which we seek, for desire is the soul
and to the desire the promise is
u read (Ps. cxlv. 19)—"He will

pleading with God, or ...
felt desire to God. "But the desire of the righteous shall be granted." We must only pray for what God has promised. I cannot consistently believe that God will give me anything, except he has promised in his word to do so. If, therefore, I desire anything for myself, my family, the Church, my country, or the world, I must first ask, Is there any particular promise in which God has said that he will give it? If there is not, then, Is the blessing I desire included in any of the more general promises? Again, Does the promise refer to any particular circumstance? If so, are the ... Or is it made to the



hear me. I thought if I prayed loud and long he would: he does not; I am grieved, irritated, and disappointed. But I ought not to be; for God has said, "First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come" (Matt. v. 24): this I have neglected; in so doing, I have regarded "iniquity in my heart;" and under such circumstances God could not hear my prayer.

If we would have faith in prayer, we must, when praying, realize God as present with us, and listening to us. It is often the case that we seem to be praying in an empty room, or to a being at a great distance from us. This is wrong. We address a present God. One who stands before us in all his glorious perfections, and who is waiting to receive our petitions and bless our souls. The heart is never right in prayer except we realize that we are alone with God, or that God is attending to us as if he had nothing else to attend to. We must solemnly prostrate ourselves before God—not so much the body as the soul. Thus did Abraham, though he was emphatically God's friend: though God stood before him in a human form, yet he prostrated all his powers before God, and was filled with solemn awe; hence he says, "Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will *speak*." "*Behold* now, I have taken upon me



sacrifice of Christ. T
God acceptably but in
will true faith ever ve
but with the blood of
If we realize God's pre
before God's throne,
Christ's finished work,

The believing intend
dence in God. We go
is "good, and ready to
in mercy unto all ther
(Ps. lxxxvi. 5). We
word is true, that he n
in his promises, that h
now as he was when
having promised to

so good, and has promised to do so in his word. Thus we give credit to his word, rely on his veracity, and place confidence in his faithfulness. We ask in faith. We believe God will give. We have the witness in ourselves that God will hear and answer us—for our "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" or, "the confident expectation of things hoped for, the perfect persuasion of things not seen."

This faith always keeps God's glory in view, attending to the apostolic admonition, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The first inquiry, therefore, of a person under the influence of this principle is, when prompted to ask anything in prayer, "Will this honour God? Will it bring glory to his holy name? Will it further his blessed cause? Will it deepen my sanctification?" And if it is clearly seen that it will do so, then the man goes and confidently asks for it. True faith always consents that the flesh should be mortified. It will not spare the old man, but will put him off with his deeds. It will have the flesh dragged to the cross, to which it nailed the Saviour, and have it put to shame and pain. *It will bring* down our pride, self-importance,



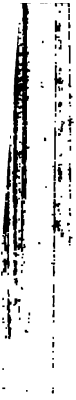
tenderly and heartily all
and pities, prays for, and
who are yet in their sins.

This faith will produ
shall ask as if we reall
We shall plead for the b
not do without it. The
the depths of the soul w
into the heart of God.
portunate. We shall not
not only seek, but knock;
continue knocking until
wide open. Like the w
shall pray, plead, and per
says, "Be it unto thee
Like the man that went

him, until he arise and have mercy upon him. This faith will awaken expectation. We shall wait, watch, and expect that the Lord will do as he has said, give as he has promised, and answer prayer according to his word. Earnest, importunate pleaders with God, always expect to be answered, and they are never disappointed.

Faith honours God, for it commits the soul to him, and seeks every blessing from him. It leaves the time when, the place where, and the means by which, the answer shall be given to the Lord. It never dictates to infinite wisdom, complains of infinite love, or doubts the faithfulness of the Most High. It leaves everything for him, or holds everything loosely, ready to surrender it at his command; and when all is gone for Christ and his cause, it rises like the lark from its torn nest and sings, "Doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him" (Phil. iii. 8, 9).

God honours faith, by conferring much upon it. Indeed, he never says it nay. The Saviour has put a blank into the hand of faith signed with his own name. He says, "Fill it up, ask *for what you* please, and go to my Father for



Father may be honoured by [illegible]
we read: "I go unto my Father.
ever ye shall ask in my name, tha
the Father may be glorified in t
xiv. 12, 13). God ascribes much
he ascribes more to faith than
of the human mind, any work
of his creatures, or any other gr
Spirit. It is faith that has p
and prevails. Faith opens h
God's treasury, presents God
payment, and brings numerou
everlasting blessings into our po
increase our faith! Holy S
pray in faith; and may it b
it was of Abraham, "He stag
[illegible]

"The blood, the righteousness, and love
Of Jesus will we plead;
He lives within the veil above,
For us to intercede!

"Sure ground, and sure foundation too,
We find in Jesus' name;
Herein we every blessing view,
And every favour claim.

"Then let his name for ever be
To us supremely dear;
Our only all-prevailing plea
For all our hope is there.

"This is the name the Father loves
To hear his children plead;
And all such pleading he approves,
And blesses them indeed."

FAMILY PRAYER.

"Praying with all prayer."—Eph.



S there are different kinc
—private, public, soci
mestic—the Christian
to pray always with
Whatever leads us to God does
the seasons when we approach
best seasons. Pray we *must*, if w
God, for prayer is then the breath
and pray we should, alone, or w
opportunity may offer. We can
too often, or be with God too mu
many wants, and prayer will ol

It is necessary—for we should acknowledge God in our social relations—we should say by our conduct, without fear or shame, "I am the Lord's." It is included in bringing up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Our children and servants should hear us pray. The daily devout and scriptural prayers of the head of a family are the best lessons that can be given on prayer. It is beautiful; for what sight is more lovely than to see the master of the family, with all his domestics around him, first reading God's Word to them, and then praying for God's blessing upon them? They all hear the same truth, bow before the same throne, and are led to the same good and gracious God. Oh, it is a lovely sight! It is *beneficial*—it is the means which God often employs to produce salutary impressions, which issue in a sound conversion. Many have had to bless the day they ever went into a praying family. Then it often prevents disagreements, and works out a reconciliation where parties have disagreed. It is also God's ordinance, through which he sends down innumerable blessings upon them. God is specially present when a family meets for prayer: he receives the confessions, listens to the *complaints*, pardons the sins, grants the re-

quests, and impa... group. A family witho... exposed to ten thousand dangers without an altar is only imperfectly furnish... To profess Christ, and have no family prayer, is beneath the poor heathens who have, and worship, their worthless household gods.

Prayer in the family should be *short*: long prayers are never acceptable in the presence of others, but they are very injurious in family where there are children or unconverted servants. Prayer in the family should be *simple*: it should be a simple confession of sin, acknowledgement of mercies, application for blessings and pleading for pardon. The less of art the more of nature in family prayer the better. In the family should be *spiritual*... ...yer in the family is a mere form. The pr... ...it is a mere form. The pr... ...live near to God therefo...

acknowledged, so many parties to be remembered, so many promises to plead, there can be no reason why there should be a tiresome sameness. Variety generally interests, engages, and pleases, therefore aim at variety in family prayer. Prayer in the family should be *regular:* some have family prayer only on Lord's-days, and some only on particular occasions. Supper parties appear to be the invention of Satan, to set aside family prayer and do mischief in the families of professors, and his scheme too frequently succeeds. He that wishes to bring up his family for God, or to set an example which is likely to make a salutary impression on his domestics, should avoid all parties or meetings which are prolonged to a late hour. They *have* done, and in some places *are* doing incalculable mischief.

Many professors have no family prayer; reader, have you? If not, what is the reason? Do you plead the want of gifts? Allow me to ask you, Have you ever made the trial? Have you ever sought the gift from God? Many persons who can talk very fluently before their families upon matters of business, or politics, or other subjects of conversation, pretend that they cannot pray with their families. They can *talk to them,* or to others about them, but they

cannot [illegible] There is [illegible]
them. There is [illegible] to be feared [illegible]
here, and it is to be feared [illegible]
state of the heart, and not in the lack of [illegible]
The gift of prayer, like every other gift, grows
by a judicious use of it. Those who have found
great difficulty in commencing family prayer,
have soon found the difficulty vanish by use
The devil hates family prayer, and will do a
he can to keep us from it, or to make us wea
of it. Many who have family prayer may
most as well have none. They drive it of
such a late hour, that all are thoroughly
out and cannot enjoy it. Or they read o
lifeless, tiresome, barren form. Or they
in such a dull, monotonous, formal m
that no one feels an interest, or deriv
[illegible] from it. Or they act so incons
[illegible] the family, when
[illegible]stics do

appy without. They enjoy it, and, gene- speaking, their domestics enjoy it with n. They exercise their judgment, and adapt devotions to times, persons, and circum- ces. They throw their hearts into their ayers. Their affections are engaged, and ow themselves. They manifest that they know God, are in friendship with him, and feel at home in his presence. Reader, is there an altar in your house? Do you collect your household regularly around it? Do you aim so to conduct family prayer as to make a good, a pleasing, a profitable impression? Is there incense on your altar *twice* in the day, or only once; every day, or only occasionally? Is there a sweet perfume of devotion, grateful alike to spiritual persons and to God? Beloved, family prayer will never be what it ought to be until we live nearer to God. When our fellowship with God is close, intimate, and filial, then all our mercies, whether in the sanctuary, the sick-room, or the family, will be savoury, salutary, and impressive. There will be a power, a sweetness, and a spirituality *about them*, which must be realized to be *known, and* even then cannot be described. *Alas!* we are so worldly, so carnal, so cold, that *the difference* between us and the world is ver-

ist, and
glory of the
ather, Son, and Holy Spi
nd desire that all that are under
may be the temples of God, the epis
Christ, the habitation of the Comforter; take,
oh, take them, and consecrate them to thyself
for ever!

"When, soon or late, we reach the coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
May we be found, no wanderer lost,
A family in heaven!"



LI.

AN EXAMPLE TO DEACONS.

WHEN Deacon Barker, of Newport, was on his death-bed, and his pastor went to see him, he said, "*Pastor, I never heard you preach a sermon, but I always prayed God to bless and help you.*"

Deacons, here is an example for you. Whenever you see your pastor ascend the pulpit, whenever you see him rise to speak in the Lord's name, lift up your hearts to God for his blessing. Two such deacons would be to a pastor what Aaron and Hur were to Moses when Israel was engaged with Amalek in the valley, and similar results may be expected. Alas! there are deacons who, when the preacher rises to address his people, instead of lifting up the heart to God for his blessing, are adjusting the scales of orthodoxy to weigh every statement, in order to ascertain if there are sixteen ounces to the pound. There are others who sit *criticising the style* and action of the preacher, and

who are
and graceful gestur
indulge in prejudice, and seek
take offence. But we have many deacons
hear with charity, and plead with God for the
pastor while delivering his message. But we
want more such. Indeed, we want none but
such. For those who always pray for the
pastor will work with him, and be a blessing to
him. The spirit of prayer will awaken and
keep alive holy sympathy, will unite heart t
heart, will keep down improper tempers, a
will stimulate to do anything and everythi
that will further the cause of God, promote
unity of the Church, and bring sinners to
pentance. There can be no question but De
Barker was a peaceful man, regular and
ttendance upon the means of
the Church, and te
we ha

if they had only been privileged to have scriptural deacons!

Members of the Church of Christ, be careful whom you choose to fill this important office, for you had better have no deacons than inconsistent ones. Let not your choice be influenced by wealth or station in life, but by holiness, interest in the cause of God, and thorough consecration to God's glory. Deacons of the Church of Christ, often read over the scriptural account of the qualifications required in you, and pray the Lord to bestow them upon you. Imitate Deacon Barker; set the example of early and regular attendance on the means of grace; never let your pastor stand up to preach without lifting up your heart to God for his blessing on the sermon; hear devotionally, not critically; and endeavour to cheer his mind under depression, and encourage him when he is cast down. Your pastor is sure to be very much influenced by you, either for good or evil. You *must* be a blessing or a curse to him. You *will* either help or hinder him. A great weight of responsibility rests upon you; do not lose sight of it, or endeavour to cast it off, but deaconize in the prospect of eternity, as those who must give an account. In pecuniary affairs be punctual, straightforward, and scrupulously honest

your payments,
of God. Never let the p
his salary, because you have neglected
upon the people for their subscriptions. Never
let the pastor go short, because you fail to re-
mind members of their duty. Treat your pastor
in all things as the servant of God, the minister
of Jesus Christ, as one placed over you by the
Holy Ghost. Never forget that you must *face*
him before the judgment-seat of Christ; that
both pastor and deacons must give an accoun
of themselves to God; that there is nothing
the gospel to sanction cold neglect, careless
difference, or lordly assumption, but everyth
to produce and require love, tenderness,
concern for his comfort. Oh, that dea
tors, and people may be filled with the
with loving hearts, enligh
they may wal



lod, hasten, hasten this desirable and
ht state of the Church, for Jesus'

messenger of dear delight,
Those voice dispels the deepest night,
Sweet peace-proclaiming dove!
With thee at hand to soothe our pains,
No wish unsatisfied remains,
No task, but that of love.

'is love unites what sin divides;
he centre where all bliss resides,
To which the soul once brought,
eclining on the First Great Cause,
rom his abounding sweetness draws
Peace passing human thought.

orrow foregoes its nature there,
nd life assumes a tranquil air,
Divested of its woes;
here sovereign goodness soothes the breast,
ill then incapable of rest,
In sacred sure repose."

LII.

ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?

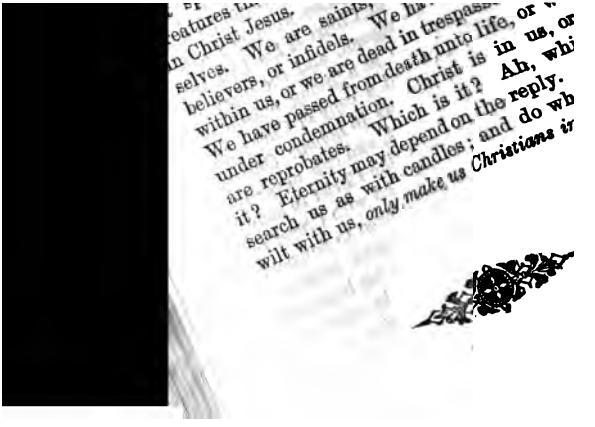
THIS is a momentous question, and
ought to be decided. The rule
decision is God's holy Word, a
that alone, for the same shall ju
us at the last day (John xii. 48). Many f
that they are Christians, but are not.
profess to be Christians, but they are dec
The foolish virgins made a professior
not suspected; they thought th
persevered until the bri
found that thei
Fea

flowing from a new nature. We may ıge our opinions, we may alter our course, God alone can change our hearts; and un- our hearts are changed, we are not Chris- s. The Holy Spirit, in regeneration, con- es us of sin, humbles us before God, makes ry out for mercy, leads us to the Lord Jesus st, breaks our hearts in contrition, turns souls against sin, and makes us long, pant, pray for holiness. All this springs from a life, or a new nature produced within us; ıat it is all natural. We have not to force elves to think, or to feel, or to act; we do so ırally, and without any discernible effort. see things in a different light, we feel dif- ıtly toward them, and are in a new world. things pass away, and all things become . Christ is our hope, our peace, our pattern, our joy. We rest on his sacrifice, rely on work, rejoice in his grace, and glory in his name. We wonder we did not see his ıty before, we grieve that we ever offended , and we long to glorify him in every ight, word, and action. The world loses its ms, Satan his power, and death its sting. eyes are enlightened, our hearts are re- ed, our wills are changed, our consciences *leansed*, and our course is the opposite of



any man have not t
none of his. The Ho
in the name of Chris
He changes the bent
the whole course of
alters the disposition.
as our model. He st
formity to him. He l
resemblance. He tea
that we may live sober
in the present world.
leads us to believe G
confidence in God's f
of prayer, he leads u
helps our infirmities i
love, he inflames our
to the Saviour, to th
around us. As a Spi

with the Spirit of God. He is the temple of God. He is formed to show forth the praises of God. He lives for God. He walks with God. He does the works of God. Jesus is his pattern and perfect example. He often compares himself with Christ, deploring his defects, seeking grace that he may more exactly conform himself to his will, and desiring to copy his example in all things. He lives in Christ, and Christ lives in him. The word of Christ is his law, the frown of Christ is his hell, the smile of Christ is his heaven, and the glory of Christ is his end. He is a living epistle of Christ for all to read, and a copy of Christ for all to admire. He delights to honour Christ, rejoices to hear him exalted, and can never be satisfied until he is exactly like Christ in body, soul, and spirit. He is crucified with Christ to the world. He is risen with Christ to newness of life. He has ascended with Christ, in spirit, to the Father. He bears about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and seeks that the life also of Jesus should be manifest in his mortal flesh (2 Cor. iv. 10, 11). He is a man of another nature, walking by another rule, living for another end, and travelling to another country to what others are. Reader, are you a *Christian?*

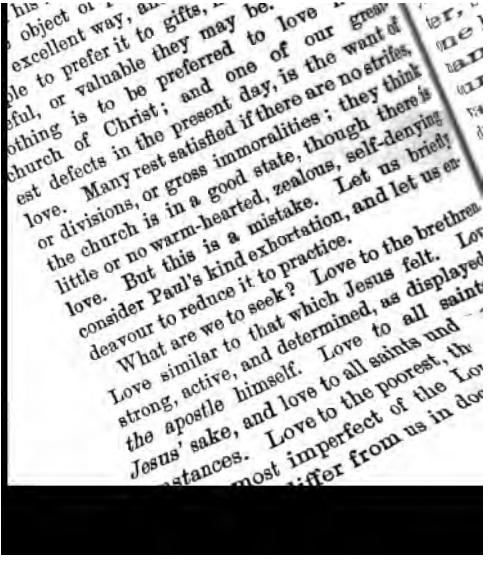


LIII.

THE OBJECT TO BE PURSUED.

"Follow after charity."—1 Cor. xiv. 1.

THE word rendered "charity" is love; and the religion of Jesus is the religion of love. It originated in the love of God to us—his free, infinite, and eternal love; and it produces love in us first toward himself, and then toward his beloved people. Love is the standard of real religion, and we just have as much religion as we have love. Love is the bond of union in the church of Christ, and should, therefore, be zealously cultivated, and carefully guarded. The peace, the purity, and the prosperity of the church depend very much upon the love of its members. A loving church is sure to be a peaceful, prosperous, and happy church; but if they have *not* love, though there may be *members, wealth,* and quietness, there is no true *prosperity.* The Corinthian Church abounded *in gifts, but it* was deficient in love; hence





, in many other things, yet, if they belong
ist, we should love them. Every one
have a place in the warm affections of
arts, if they prove that they have a place
heart of Christ. To live in the neglect
, is to live in sin. To be cold and indif-
toward one another, is contrary to the
Christ. He says, "Love one another *as*
loved you." It is practically neglecting
monition of the Holy Spirit, who says,
iat ye love one another, with a pure heart,
'y." Love adorns the Christian charac-
ences the church's foes, makes the loving
ppy, and brings honour to the Saviour's
Vain is our profession of Christ, vain
stly alms-deeds, vain our mighty faith,
ir painful sufferings, and vain our splen-
ts, if we are destitute of holy love. Let
der deeply and prayerfully the testimony
Holy Spirit, by the apostle, upon this
Paul places himself before us with all
tly endowments, with all his wondrous
with all his varied sufferings; and that
y impress and deeply affect our minds,
, "*Though* I speak with the tongues of
l of angels, and have not love, I am be
sounding brass, or a tinkling cymb
ugh I have the gift of prophecy,

and though I have ...
remove mountains, and have not love, ...
thing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, *it profiteth me nothing*." How solemn, how interesting, how affecting is this statement! Can we wonder that he should urge his beloved friends, and while urging *them* urge *us*, to "*follow after love?*"

Love sometimes seems to take its flight fro the church; it even appears to take its flig from our bosoms. We can look at perso whom we believe to be Christians, and feel love to them. Nay, at times we have no de to love them. We can pass them without sp ... without sincere affection.

sin might be destroyed. We should
y watch against what is opposed to love,
pent as a sin, and deeply deplore it before
heavenly Father's throne. We should dili-
y cultivate a loving spirit, remembering
t is the very image of God, and our near-
assimilation to the Lord Jesus Christ. Does
ne to evade us, to fly from us? Let us
r it with determined step, with patient
rseverance, with strong cries and tears to
r help. Is it opposed to our natural dis-
on? Let us yield up ourselves unto God,
he may sanctify us wholly in body, soul,
pirit.

re is humble; it is never proud of itself,
ill it allow its possessor to boast, or to
value others, in order to exalt himself.
is patient; it will not fly at every sup-
insult, or be provoked by every appearance
glect. Love is active; it will do, or give,
to comfort, or relieve, or benefit, any of its
s. Love is self-denying; it looks from
it loses sight of itself, and wishes to do
good, and make others happy. Love is
l; it will allow others to think differently,
differently, without being prejudiced or
ed, except God be dishonoured, and his
njured. "Love," says the Holy Spirit,

is not easily provoked, ...
joiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth
beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth
all things, endureth all things. Love never
faileth." Let us, therefore, heartily, earnestly
and constantly follow after love. It is the ob
ject of Satan's special hatred, consequently h
makes the most determined opposition to it
exercise, and endeavours by all means to pr
vent its cultivation. It is also opposed to s
the selfish principles of our fallen nature, a
is, therefore, opposed by them all. But
should ever remember that God requires it,
only in his law, but also in his gospel. Nor
he be pleased with us, if we neglect, or tri
or run counter to this his holy and necess
... He sent his own Son to se



ll these call for love. They unite, and with ne strong, energetic, and solemn voice they cry, 'Follow after love." All admire love. It is he most powerful instrument we can wield. Would we spread the truth? Would we conquer the enemies of the gospel? Would we win over the young to the cause of God? Would we silence gainsayers? Would we close the mouths of infidels? Would we effectually conquer Rome? In one word, would we honour God, exalt Jesus, sow to the Spirit, heal he wounds of the Church, make a good impression on the world, or be really happy ourselves, t must be effected by love. We must, one and all, in public and private, by searching he heart, by pleading with God, by denying elf, by using all the means which God has appointed or the gospel furnished, "*follow after love.*"

Reader, is love an object of admiration with you? Does it appear as most desirable, not only in others, but also in yourself? Do you sigh, cry, pray, and pant for it? Are you mourning over the want of it in others, but especially in yourself? Is it the object of your pursuit? Or can you indulge in unlovely tempers, use and sanction harsh and uncharitable *xpressions,* and live in a state of alienation

profession is not p...
Christianity may be embraced, and ... self be rejected. A change may take place a man's conduct, and yet there may be change in his heart. We may be moral, not spiritual; amiable, but not holy; ot creatures than we were, but not new creatu in Christ Jesus. We are for Christ, or for c selves. We are saints, or sinners. We believers, or infidels. We have the life of within us, or we are dead in trespasses and We have passed from death unto life, or w under condemnation. Christ is in us, c are reprobates. Which is it? Ah, wh it? Eternity may depend on the reply. search us as with candles; and do wha ...th us, *only make us Christians ind*

LIII.

)BJECT TO BE PURSUED.

ow after charity."—1 Cor. xiv. 1.

E word rendered "charity" is love; and the religion of Jesus is the religion of love. It originated in the love of God to us—his free, eternal love; and it produces love ward himself, and then toward his ple. Love is the standard of real l we just have as much religion as . Love is the bond of union in the Christ, and should, therefore, be ıltivated, and carefully guarded. he purity, and the prosperity of the ınd very much upon the love of . A loving church is sure to be a sperous, and happy church; but if ɔt *love*, though there may be mem- and quietness, there is no true The Corinthian Church abounded was deficient in love; hence its

LIV.

MAY AND MUST;

OR, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

THE present differs very materi from the future—there are m things which we *may* do now, there are many which we *mus* by-and-by. We *may* refuse to come to Lord Jesus Christ now, that we may have but if we do, we *must* suffer the bitter pan for ever reap the due d

us in the gospel; but we *must* endure what his justice awards in another world, if we do. He that *will* not be saved by free grace, *must* be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

We *may* be saved now; but if we are not, we *must* be lost for ever. We *may* become the friends of God now; but if we do not, we *must* be treated as his enemies for ever. We may be united to the person of Jesus here; but if we are not, we *must* be banished from his presence in another world. The *future* depends on the *present*. As we sow, we reap. As we treat God now, he will treat us another day. He bears with us at present, he is loath to punish us; but mercy has its bounds, and forbearance has its limits. When these are reached, then all is over, for then nothing remains but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation." When once God gives us up, all is over. When he says, "*Let him alone*," our destiny is fixed. Bnt this is never done until justice requires it. If a man *will not* be saved, *ought he not* to be left to the consequences of *his own choice* and determination? If he will *refuse to hear* God's voice, to listen to his solemn *warnings*, or to accept his loving invitations,

this be right? When Isra
to his voice, he gave them u
And shall God act differe
what he did towards his ov
You stand on solemn grou
requires the most seriou
judgment, and eternity ar
eternal hell, an eternal
them must be your portic
heaven; but if you will not
If you go to hell, it will be
walk in the way to it—a
preference to walking in
God will never send you
finds you in the way to it;
can you expect but to ar
which you have been jo
What can you expect from

just? What! work hard in the ways of sin for twenty, forty, or sixty years, with the express understanding that the wages of sin is death, and then say it is not just to be paid the wages for which you have so long, so diligently, and so determinedly laboured! Is this consistent? If you *will* do the work, expect the wages. If you *will* travel the road, expect to arrive at the end to which it leads. If you *will* live God's enemy, do not expect to be treated as if you had been his friend. No, no; be consistent. If you wish to go to heaven, take the road that leads to it, and be sure you take the right road. If you wish to dwell with God in another world, be reconciled to him in this. If you wish to be happy in eternity, then seek to be holy in time.

Well, friend, how is it to be? You *may* go on in sin, or you *may* repent and turn to God. You *may* reject the Saviour, or you *may* receive him as God's free gift. You *may* come to Jesus and have life, or you *may* refuse to do so, and sink into eternal death. God hath set before you in his Word the way of life and the way of death, therefore choose life, that you may live. He has opened a way for sinners, by the sacrifice of his dear Son; and he is willing to give his Holy Spirit to sinners, if they ask him in fervent prayer. You *may* be happy; but if you

great responsibility; you ...
for the most solemn consideration. You ...,
and therefore should bless God for his kindness;
you *must*, and therefore beware how you trifle
with his grace. You *may*—oh, seize and im-
prove the opportunity! you *must*—oh, flee, flee
from the wrath to come! You *may*—oh, lose
not one moment, for there is no time to spare!
you *must*—oh, delay not, for delays have landed
thousands in hell! "We *must* all appear be-
fore the judgment-seat of Christ." The Scrip
tures *must* be fulfilled. God *must* be faithfu
We *must* repent of sin, believe on the Lo
Jesus Christ, and come unto God by him,
WE ARE UNDONE FOR EVER.

"O God, my inmost soul convert,
... thoughtful heart



LV.

PREPARED FOR THE WORST.

I AM prepared for the worst," said a young man, as he went off on a journey, with his greatcoat, wrapper, and umbrella. And in the se in which he used the words, he was, as only referred to a little cold or rain. But words may be taken in a much more imtant sense, and even then there are some o can say, "I am prepared for the worst." ıat is the worst? and what is it to be pred for the worst? These are very important, ›resting, and solemn questions. Let us look hem for a few moments.

)EATH! Is that the worst? So perhaps ıe would think. It is the most solemn event t can happen to us in this world. It has *n called "the* king of terrors," and "of all *ble things"* it has been said to be "the most *ble." Well*, death, in one view of it, is a *hing. It is the enemy of our nature.*

course. It ends his existence in the presen
state. It introduces him to an unseen world
to an unknown state of existence. It termi
nates his plans, schemes, and pleasures, an
puts his purposes and pretensions to the tes
It is very solemn. Are we prepared for it
Except our sins are pardoned, our nature
renewed, and our souls reconciled to God, w
cannot be. Sin is the sting of death. I
gives it power to injure us, to wound us, t
destroy our brightest hopes. If it reign in u
it will ruin us. If death finds us in an unpa
doned state, it will be dreadful. But if, throug

grave, and introduces the soul to God and glory.

JUDGMENT! Is standing before the judgment-seat the worst? So some would say. And it is enough to awaken the most serious thoughts, and arouse ten thousand fears. To appear before divine justice, represented by the Son of God, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, to give an account of our conduct, or rather misconduct, for twenty, or forty, or sixty years—how solemn! how fearful this! To account for sins against the best of beings, against the plainest precepts, for so many years, and to feel that we have not the least excuse to offer for our conduct! He never provoked us by his conduct towards us, or injured us in his dealings with us. We sinned just because we would sin; and we persevered in sin because we perversely preferred doing so, to obeying his wise and holy precepts. He has commanded us to prepare to give an account in his Word; he apprehends by his officer death; and he will summon us to appear before his bar by the sound of the archangel's trumpet. Are we prepared for this? We may be, *but are we?* If so, we have embraced the Saviour, and are justified through his finished work. We have sought and received *the Holy Spirit*, and are sanctified by his

But is this the case? If
to answer for, we are undo
obtained a pardon—we
we applied for it while Je
of grace; but we neglecte
the door of hope is shut,
vacated, and mercy has
That we have one sin lai
accounted for by ourselves
our own fault. God was
was exalted to give repen
sion of sins. We were ass
that by him all that beli
all things. But if we w
that we might have li
receive the pardon pres
reconciliation promised,
might have been pardo

HELL! This is the worst. Nothing can be compared to hell. What is it but the wrath of God endured, the endless lashings of a guilty conscience experienced, the desert of sin inflicted upon the sinner? In hell, black despair reigns, remorse is eternally felt, and pain and agony must be eternally endured. In hell, justice appears in all its terrible majesty, mercy is for ever excluded, and sinners are left to torment themselves, and to be tormented by Satan and his angels without end. Reader, are you prepared for this? Can thine heart endure, and can thy hands be strong, in the day that God shall deal with thee? *Will you go to hell?* This question is proposed to you every time you hear the gospel. *Will you go to hell?* This question I most solemnly ask you now. You need not, for there is a way of escape. You need not, for God is good, and ready to forgive. You need not, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. You need not, for "the Spirit and the bride say, Come... and take of the fountain of the water of life freely." But if you refuse to come, I protest unto you that you shall surely perish. If you reject the Saviour, I ask you, in his own words, "HOW SHALL YOU ESCAPE THE DAMNATION OF HELL?" Are you prepared to *linger eternally* in endless pains? Are you

h devouring fire, to lan-
urnings? *Are you?* Can
eech you with all earnest-
ness, to lay these things to
at once to Jesus. Receive
art by faith. Renounce all
es, give up yourself to him,
maining days for him; so will
for the worst. Yes, then you
h time and all its changes, and
h all its solemnities, and sing,—

the wildest storms arise,
pests mingle earth and skies;
e in Christ, the ark of grace,
on shall see him face to face.

a will to me be life and peace,
from sin, a sweet release;
Jesus' precious blood,
live with God."

SUPPOSE I

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LVI.

UPPOSE I SHOULD DIE SUDDENLY.

A SUDDEN death is a very solemn event. It has a voice. It is sent with a message to us. It says, "Be ye also ready." It reminds us that time is short. That life is uncertain. That death is near. That eternity is just at hand. That there is only a thin veil between us and the eternal world. That we may be called away at any moment. That dying is going the way whence we shall not return. Death is always solemn! sudden death is peculiarly so. It should make us serious. It should lead to reflection. Let me, then, direct my thoughts to it for a few minutes.

Suppose I should die suddenly. I may. There *is no security* against it. It is possible, if not *probable*;—but what renders it improbable?

"Dangers stand thick through all the ground,
To push us to the tomb."

it an event to be dreaded ... ?
or only on account of others? To the tru
Christian, sudden death is sudden glory. Th
soul departs to be with Christ, which is fa
better than remaining here. But would th
be my case? Am I in Christ? Is Christ foun
in my heart the hope of glory? Is my bod
the temple of the Holy Spirit? Am I bo
again? Solemn inquiries these! Without
new birth there can be no salvation. Jes
has most distinctly and positively declared
His words are peculiarly solemn and strikir
May they sink down deep into our hear
"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a m
... the kingdom

and then if, while deceived by such a
[illegible] die suddenly, what dreadful
[illegible] would follow! Such a mistake
[illegible] be rectified. The effects of it must
[illegible] for ever. How very strange it is
[illegible] can rest satisfied one hour without
[illegible] that we are born again, when
[illegible] that we may die suddenly, and that
[illegible] our state is fixed for ever!

[illegible] *I should die suddenly to-day.* I may.
I do, where shall I spend this night?
shall I be to-morrow? What will be
rtion for ever? Jesus tells us of one
this life had everything his heart could
nd to warn us against neglecting the
hile feasting the body, he utters these
words: "The rich man died, and was
and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in
ts." I doubt not but he was taken by
e; he never thought that he should sink
ll. I dare say that none of his friends
so uncharitably, or rather so justly, as
ose that he was lifting up his eyes, in
ing in torments. But it was so; and he
rments now, and in these torments he
ain for ever. O fearful case! But will
e? Is it possible that it may be my
that of any one nearly related to me?

a relative on the road ...
ful meeting it must be to meet near ...
dear relatives in hell, and yet it is constan
taking place! If I go to hell, whom shal
meet there? If my relatives go to hell,
they cast any part of the blame on me? H
I warned them? Have I done all I can
prevent so fearful a doom? Conscience
charge thee be honest, in answering me, H
I done all I can to prevent my relatives
going to that place of torment?

I may die suddenly. Then let me see
at once that all is right for eternity. L
make sure work. Let there be no procr
tion. Let there be no excuses indulged
me never rest satisfied another night
repentance toward G

and the next, to be in the presence of God, angels, and glorified saints! To be free from sin, sorrow, care, and trouble—beyond the reach of doubt, fear, and the enemy of the soul—and to enjoy certainty, satisfaction, and the fulness of joy for ever! But the alternative! Ah, the alternative! If I die suddenly, and die out of Christ—if I die unsanctified and unsaved—how dreadful even the supposition! but what must the reality be? To be one hour in comfort, surrounded by relatives and friends, in the land of hope and mercy; and the next, in the regions of despair, filled with anguish, bitter regrets, and hopeless misery!

Reader, you may die suddenly, you may die to-day; and if you do, your state will be fixed for ever. Do not conclude that you are safe without a thorough examination. Let nothing decide your case but God's unerring Word. There is but one foundation for a sinner's hope, and that is Christ Jesus. There is no certainty of life beyond the present moment. Therefore make your calling and your election sure.

"Seize the kind promise while it waits,
And march to Zion's heavenly gates:
Believe, and take the promised rest,
Obey, and be for ever blessed."

AN ADDRESS TO A CHURCH OF



ELOVED in th as you have together as a obedience to the word of exhortation. Christians, and if you are "the Spirit of Christ;" not the Spirit of Christ, You are called "the ligh salt of the earth," "the "the temples of the Hol dren of the living God."

are united to Jesus, whose fulness is opened to supply you, and who is exalted at God's right hand to bless you. You are united to one another; you have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and have pledged yourselves to seek each other's good. You profess to seek the glory of God, your own edification, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, by this your union. Ever keep these things in mind, for your peace, prosperity, and comfort, in a great measure depend thereon. You are not your own; you are not at liberty to seek your own gratification, but in subordination to the great ends you profess to seek. Jesus bought you with his blood; he claims you as his own, and commands you to walk according to his Word. His eye is always upon you, and he is either glorified or dishonoured by every action you perform. Your privileges are great, and your duties are many; and ever remember, privileges are to be enjoyed in the performance of the duties required. You have received a kingdom, you are entitled to grace, and you are exhorted to have it (Heb. xii. 28; iv. 16). You can only serve God acceptably as you serve him under the influence of his own grace, according to his Word, with a view to his glory. *Receive, then,* with meekness, and with a desire

to walk according to them, [illegible]

Jesus.

He bids you *love one another*—even as [illegible]

loved you. Indulge no evil surmisings in re-

ference to each other: charity thinketh no

evil. Beware lest you encourage a spirit of

jealousy or envy; it will disturb your peace

and destroy your usefulness. Guard against

speaking evil one of another. Brethren, [illegible]

Lord says, "Speak evil of no man." We

against an unforgiving spirit, and as "God

Christ's sake hath forgiven you," so also

Be ever ready to assist one another, acc

as God has given you ability, both in t

spiritual things. Avoid a co

tious turn of mind: it i

pestilence i

are



love and to good works. Satan will endeavour to disunite you, and sow discord among us; he hates to see saints in union, and employs every stratagem to prevent it. Guard against a spirit of pride and self-consequence: it will render you miserable, useless, and barren; you will be uncomfortable in yourselves, and a plague to all about you. Endeavour by all means, at all times, to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Never allow yourselves to carry into the world the concerns of the church; carry them to the Lord in prayer, but never tell them to any other. It is tale-bearing, and a breach of your church-covenant; a disgrace to the person who practises it, and a trouble to the church that permits it.

Do all things to edification. When you meet at your houses, or in the house of God, always aim to edify one another. You do one another good or evil every time you meet, therefore let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, that you may be able to comfort, admonish, and advise one another. Be present, if possible, when your brethren meet together *for prayer and* praise, and never absent yourself *from any* ordinance except lawfully detained. *The* diligent soul shall be made fat, *the idle* soul shall suffer hunger.

you can put
other's burdens, and so fulfil the
"Exhort one another daily." Imitate God as dear children. "Be clothed with humility." "Let each esteem other better than himself." Put on "bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering." "Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love," giving honour one to another. "Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Consider one another as compassed with infirmities, exposed to temptations, and possessing like passions with yourselves.

"Receive ye one another as Christ also received you to the glory of God." "Those who are weak in the faith receive ye." You are not at liberty to reject the lambs of the flock: those that are, say least, often wear th

Submit to the discipline prescribed in God's Word; never wish to keep any in the Church whose spirit and conduct say they ought to be out of it. Consult the honour of Christ and the good of the cause upon these matters, not your own feelings. Jesus requires you to pluck out a right eye if it is an offence, a hindrance, or a stumbling-block; and to cut off a right hand. Strive and pray that the Church may be kept pure; sound in doctrine and holy in practice. The door out of the Church should be exactly of the same dimensions as the door in; and there is sinful partiality if it is not so.

Never make private differences public except it be absolutely necessary. Observe the rule given by the Saviour (Matt. xviii. 15–20). Never report a quarrel until you have reproved and prayed for the offender. Offences will come; always endeavour to remove them out of the way as quickly as possible. Be sure you never encourage any fellow-member who retails the saints' faults; the Lord tells you an angry countenance will drive away a backbiting tongue. If you refuse to receive, they will soon leave off their practice. Make all due allowance for your brethren; remember you also have your infirmities, and are exposed to *temptations*. If God leave you, sin will soon

[illegible],
is the way to convert him, [illegible]
titude of sins" (James v. 19, 20). Never [illegible]
tion sin in any, nor condemn rashly; strive against a hasty spirit, and study to be quiet. Always aim to act in every place, and under every circumstance, that observers may be obliged to say, That person is a Christian. Let your light so shine, and your good works be seen, that God may be glorified.

Be very careful over your spirit and conduct at church-meetings; these are either the honour or disgrace of the Church. Remember you are in God's house, you profess to be tender of his honour, his eye is upon you, and the peace, prosperity, and comfort of the Church [illegible] depend upon your conduct and spirit [illegible]worthy, and holy. Kee



the backsliding, the penitent, your
l deacons: all have a claim upon you,
be benefited by you. Encourage
:hort the lukewarm, caution the rash,
backslider to turn again to the Lord,
ick and dying, speak comfortably to
ed and sorrowful, and pray for all.
you can under the Word, and beseech
et with them when there.

bear in mind you must give an ac-
rourselves to God. You are account-
l you say, do, or occasion to be done;
ill bring every work into judgment,
y secret thing, whether it be good, or
; be evil." Your actions are perma-
igh they appear but transient. Be
it talker, aim to be a holy, humble,
lker. Shun the company of those
discord among brethren. Keep a
:ience. Give honour to whom honour
Beware of the spirit of the world.
ot the Holy Spirit of God," either by
looseness, or bitterness; but sow the
:ighteousness—sow to the Spirit, and
ap life everlasting. Avoid the appear-
l. "Walk circumspectly." "Walk
God." "Be of one mind, live in peace,"
l of love and peace shall be with you."

They will take more notice of what you [illegible]
than of what you *say*. So walk before them
that you may be able to say to them without
blushing, Be ye followers of me, even as I am
of Christ. "Bring them up in the nurture and
admonition of the Lord." They are a trust
committed to you, and their sanctification and
salvation should lie nearer your hearts than
anything else. "Husbands, love your wives."
Are they unconverted? endeavour to win
them by a lovely spirit and holy conduct.
"Wives, submit yourselves to your own hus-
bands," study their comfort in all things. Are
they without? strive by kindness, a manifest

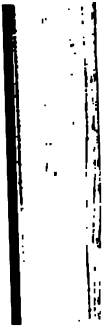
mistresses: they will keep their eyes upon you, and expect great things from you. Be strictly honest; never take away behind your mistress' back, what you would not before her face. Be very industrious; you are hired to work, not to be idle. Be clean; cleanliness is an honour to a Christian, dirt is a disgrace. Never be pert; God's Word says you are not to answer again (Titus ii. 9). Guard against eye-service; you are directed to act towards your masters as you would toward the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. vi. 5–9). Godly, consistent servants, are very useful members in a church; but idle, gossiping, pert, dirty, talkative ones are a great mischief and disgrace. The Lord takes notice of all these things, and gives directions about them in his Word; therefore they cannot be unimportant.

Be particular as to the connections you form: many have been robbed of their simplicity, spirituality, and humility, through associating with proud, censorious, licentious professors; or from going too far and too frequently with the worldly. If you are single, be very careful to whom you give up your company, or allow to entangle your affections; you are at liberty to marry "only in the Lord." If you *dare to unite* with an unregenerate person, you

despise the authority of
the command of the Lord Jesus
the Holy Spirit, and ensure to yourselves
and sorrow. Your bodies are "the temples of
the Holy Ghost," "the members of Christ,"
and should not be united to the enemies of God,
the servants of Satan. Resist Satan when he
comes with such a temptation, for many have
been entangled and overcome; and, as the consequence, have spent their days in misery
their years in sorrow. Make God's Word
guide, keep the Saviour's company, imitate
most holy of the saints, and keep yourself
unspotted from the world.
Strive to be useful to the world: if
heaven, and believe it to be
endeavour to take some
the watch

use caution in all your dealings, that you may preserve a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man. Reverence age and spirituality, pity weakness, and always loathe sin under every form.

Ever view yourselves as the property of God, for his glory; as the property of the Church, for her good. You are debtors to God for his grace, for pardon, righteousness, and eternal life. You owe a debt of gratitude and obedience. You are in debt to the Church; she has a right to your presence, your prayers, your sympathies, and your influence. A Christian has no private property; all is lent him with this command, "Occupy till I come." By love, then, serve one another. "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin," and unto the world; "but alive unto God," and to the interests of his Church, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." A Christian spirit is a public spirit; and a consistent Christian will always aim to lay himself out for the extension of the Redeemer's cause, and the glory of Jehovah's name. Happy must be that Church, of whose members it may be said, They have done what they could! They have done what they could to support, establish, and increase the cause; they have done what *they could to* add to the spirituality, to main-



may be made a praise in t
it is, let your conduct and
it beyond a doubt. Show
works; the holiness of you
consistency of your practi
yourselves, but unto him w
rose again; and whether
whatsoever ye do, do all to

View your pastor as God
the Lord's message to you.
from him not only comfor
only instruction, but exhort
offence at God's Word as d

prevent your edification. Esteem God's servants "very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves."

Finally, brethren, endeavour to keep up constant fellowship with God, seek personal holiness, and give yourselves up unreservedly to the Lord. Look upon one another as brethren, united by ties more sacred and more close than any natural bond. View one another in Christ, as members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Be concerned to know that the Spirit dwells in you and among you, as the glorifier of Christ, the sanctifier of his people, the expounder of the Scriptures, and the author of edification and peace. Bring every gift and talent you possess, and consecrate them to the Church's service and the Redeemer's praise. Wrestle with God for his presence in your assemblies, and his blessing on your souls. Realize your responsibility, and let self be denied, while patience, forbearance, and brotherly kindness, have their perfect work. And may the God of all grace, who hath called you unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

LVIII.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION:

WHAT HAVE I DONE TO SAVE A SOUL TO-I



HOUSANDS are perishing a me. Hell is enlarging itself. saves souls by human instru ality. He saves by the si means. He points to some just on the v hell, and says, "Save them with fear, p them out of the fire." Paul's object wa means to save some. He became all th all men, that he might save the more. this day in order to sav

may speak by it—it may suggest a thought which may work, and work, until the Saviour be sought and found. And can I, believing this, neglect to give away tracts? A word spoken, or a passage quoted, may save a soul. God has often used such simple means as these. And shall I neglect to speak to those about me, or fear to set God's Word before them! A letter written to a friend, has saved a soul. God works by letters written out of love to his name, with zeal for his glory, in order to bring sinners to his throne. And shall I fail to write, when I cannot speak to his friends, to warn them to flee from the wrath to come. Oh, my brethren, let us examine ourselves daily! Let us ask ourselves every night, *What have I done to save a soul this day?* If I do nothing, can I be guiltless? If I do nothing, can I be honest to my profession? If I do nothing, is it possible that I can understand the gospel? If I do nothing, can I be living in fellowship with God? If I do nothing, ought I to be a member of a Church of Christ? If I do nothing, ought I not to give up all profession of religion at once and for ever? Conscience, be honest, and speak!

How *few* realize the value of the soul! How *few make* any hearty, direct, and daily attempts



such pleasure on a death-be
reviewed with such delight fr
seat of Christ. He answers
existence, who does not h
honour God by leading soul
He does not drink into th
who does not strive to turn
ness to light, and from the
unto God. Of course we c
strumentally. But it is thu
men to repentance and faith
agent, but he uses human ins
will use us if we are fit for
sirous to be employed for his
honour upon us by employi
us, blesses us, and makes us h
so employed: and thus we p
his Word, that *in* keeping hi



ession upon the present generation, and
.e a good name in that which follows—if
would live like saints, and die like con-
erors—let us daily do something to save souls
om death. The work is most important, our
pportunities daily become less, the honour is
nspeakably glorious, and the reward is lasting
eternity; let us therefore daily endeavour to
ve souls from death. Let us speak to those
e can, and write to those we cannot. Let us
ake it our business, and follow it as our
asure; nor rest satisfied until we can say
th our beloved Lord, "My work is to do the
l of him that sent me, and to finish his
k." Verily we have been guilty; let us
it, confess it, obtain pardon for the past,
plead for grace for the future. Oh, that
y member of the Church of Christ would
hus; then the Church of Jesus would soon
"forth as the morning, fair as the moon,
as the sun, and terrible as an army with
rs." Thus saith the Lord, "He which
teth a sinner from the error of his way
ave a soul from death, and shall hide a
de of sins."





TANT QUESTION:

HIS DAY TO MAKE SURE
SALVTION.

roductory to eternity. It
to us to prepare for an
an unchangeable state of
e. The eternal future de-
nt. What we sow in this
p in the next. As we live,
die; and as we die, so we
ver. We are by nature and
deserve punish-

his obedience
But how does the
Jesus become our
is faith? It is gi
ing confidence
solely upon him
acceptance wit'
cient to give u
of Jesus, and t
It is quite suff
"*He that bel*
life." He
mouth, "*He*
life." But
it always p
generates lo
performance
liever is so
before Go
Jesus tha

s obedience is our justifying righteousness. ut how does the atonement and obedience of esus become ours? By faith only. And what s faith? It is giving credit to his word, plac- ng confidence in his work, and depending solely upon him for pardon, peace, purity, and acceptance with God. But is faith alone sufficient to give us an interest in the perfect work of Jesus, and to entitle us to everlasting life? It is quite sufficient, for his own Word declares, "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.*" He hath also declared, with his own mouth, "*He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*" But true faith will never exist alone: it always produces repentance towards God, generates love to the Saviour, and leads to the performance of good works. Every true believer is sorry for his sins; he confesses them before God with shame, pleads the blood of Jesus that they may be pardoned, and strives to conquer his bad habits in the strength of the Lord. Every real Christian loves the Saviour who died for him, and prays most heartily to be consecrated entirely, with all he hath, to the Redeemer's service and praise. He wishes to *do whatever the* Lord requires of him; to go *wherever the* Lord will send him; and if he live unto the Lord; or if he dies, to die

tion; and then does ... Saviour and to benefit his fe lives by faith in Christ, or by word of Jesus, trusting in the and exercising confidence in Jesus; but while he thus liv Christ, he is careful to mainta His object from day to day is t ing and election sure, so tha justly doubt the truth of his that he may have no reason but that he is saved in the Lo lasting salvation. Is this the case? It is. Then let *me* a done this day to make sure m Have I exercised faith in confessed my sins before God for grace to obey the comman I been striving against sin



the Lord Jesus Christ? Have I mourned over sin, sighed for holiness, and kept my eye steadily fixed on glorifying God? Or have I lost sight of eternity, neglected my duty, and been living to myself? Has there been no communion with Jesus, no zeal for God, no pity for sinners? If so, is there not reason to doubt that my religion is but a form, my profession a pretence, and my danger of eternal death imminent? Faith without works is dead. Can such faith save us? Never; it is utterly impossible. If, therefore, we would not deceive our own souls, if we would not plant thorns in our dying pillow, if we would not sink into hell under a profession of religion, let us examine ourselves carefully, let us reform our lives thoroughly, and let us give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. Every morning let us ask, "What course shall I pursue this day to put the reality of my religion beyond doubt?"—and every evening let us inquire, "What have I done this day to make sure my own salvation?" May the words of the Holy Spirit sink down deep into *our hearts*—"Be not deceived; God is not *mocked; for* whatsoever a man soweth that *shall he* also reap."



LX.

" BEHOLD, HE COM

THESE are God's wo
intended to awaken
subject of the great
to arouse our hope
tions, and to excite watchfulnes
cometh !" Who cometh ? T
He came once in humiliation
Father's mind, and to offer a s
sins : having done so, he return
present his blood, and obtain G
our great High Priest. He will
raise his dead saints, to change

one, as he is one with the Father, and the Father is one with him. He will change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious body. He will clothe us with glory, and we shall reign with him upon the earth. *He cometh!* But when? Soon; it may be very soon. We are not certain that he will stay away another day. It is long since he said, "*Behold, I come quickly!*" He is expecting that his enemies will soon be made his footstool. He will come as a thief—suddenly, unexpectedly, in flaming fire. When the world is saying, "Peace and safety"—when hosts of professing Christians are fast asleep, like the foolish virgins—the proclamation will be made, "*Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!*" Beloved, let us live daily *looking* for and *expecting* the coming of our Lord. Let us *watch*, because the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Let us be found *waiting* for the Son of God from heaven. Let us *work* for him, as those who believe he may come at any moment to examine their performances, and reward every one according to his works. Jesus will soon be here. Are we ready to receive him? Would the announcement that he had come fill us with joy and pleasure? Are we sanctified by his Spirit? *Are we justified* in his righteousness? Are we

in his service? ...
our whole persons presented to him as
sacrifice? Does the promise, "Behold
quickly," find a pleasing response
bosoms; and do we earnestly say, "
come, Lord Jesus?" "Behold, he co
clouds, *and every eye shall see him.*"

"Jesus, hail! whose glory brightens
All above, and gives it worth;
Lord of life, thy smile enlightens,
Cheers, and quickens saints on e
When we think of love like thine,
Lord, we own it love divine.

"King of glory, reign for ever—
Thine an everlasting crown;
Nothing from thy love shall sever
Those whom thou hast made th
Happy objects of thy grace,
Destined to behold thy face.

"Saviour, hasten thine appearing;
ing, oh, bring the glorious d
r





LXI.

"I SAY UNTO ALL, WATCH

THE Lord Jesus speaks to a
read his Word or hear his se
He speaks of his second a
He assures us that he will ret
our world; that he expects his disciples
ready to receive him; that he will come i
own glory, in the glory of his Father, and
his holy angels; that he comes to complet
salvation of his people, and introduce them
perfect liberty—to present his Church
himself most glorious, not having spot, wri
or any such thing. When he comes he
silence every groan, purge out every stain,
perfectly remove all disease. Holiness, he
ness, and health will then characterize
people; and himself will be their portion
his presence their joy for ever. He will c
in an unexpected moment, like the flas
lightning: the trumpet will sound, and J
will be here. He may come to-day or
night, when we are wrapped in sleep.



fore we should be ready ... shou...
ing. The coming of Jesus ...
before our minds as the object of our ...
subject of our meditation, and the m...
ful incentive to holiness. Nothing ...
the believer from yielding to tem...
dulging the flesh, or committing ...
thought, "My Saviour may come ...
doing so. What! shall I yi...
indulge in sloth, gratify my c...
mix up with the present evil ...
expect my Lord and Master ...
Impossible!" Nothing will s...
serve us from sin, fortify us ag...
consecrate us to God, and r...
...d's ways, as the believing ...
...ance of our L...



ng to see thee, we sigh to be for ever with ee, we groan to be made like thee, we daily sire the adoption, even the redemption of our dies. Can we love thee, and not wish to be ith thee? Can we believe thy Word, and not ng for thy glorious appearing? Oh, come, me quickly, and destroy the Man of Sin; ke to thyself thy great power and reign; and t the whole earth be filled with thy glory. ome and render the world thy kingdom, and y Church complete in numbers and holiness.

"Lift your heads, ye friends of Jesus,
Partners of his suff'rings here;
Christ, to all believers precious,
Lord of lords, shall soon appear:
Mark the tokens
Of his heavenly kingdom near.

"Sun and moon are both confounded
When the Lord shows forth his might;
When, with angel-hosts surrounded,
In his Father's glory bright,
Beams the Saviour,
Shines the everlasting Light.

"Lo! 'tis He! our heart's desire,
Come for his espoused below;
Come to join us with his choir;
Come to make our joys o'erflow;
Palms of victory,
Crowns of glory to bestow."

LXII.

A WORD TO THE BEREA

"I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but I will not hear."—JER. xxii. 21



ROSPERITY is not alwa
ing. Ease sometimes ge
ness. Discipline is absol
sary. The Lord spe
prosperous, but they are too bus
He brings a cloud over their affairs
his dispensation, and says, "Hear
There is a parent bereaved of a
It was an idol; or, if not, it was
of becoming so. The affections
displaced by i

sition, and it is just ready to indulge in hard thoughts of him, or to murmur against him. But it must not be. No; rather examine thy course. Turn over the pages of thy past history. Attend to the Lord's inquiry, "*Hast thou not procured this unto thyself?...See thy way.*"

An Eastern shepherd had taught his flock to know his voice and follow him. But on one occasion, when the weather was fine and all was pleasant, he wished to lead his flock to another spot. He called them to follow him. A ewe, who was feeding with her lamb beside her, refused to do so. He turned and snatched up her lamb, and carried it off in his bosom, and she readily henceforth followed his call. Just so the Good Shepherd, when we allow our lambs so to engross our attention or captivate our affections that we neglect to hear his voice and obey his call, takes our lamb, lays it in his bosom, saying, "*Follow me.*" Bereaved Christian, has Jesus taken away your lamb? He has laid it in his bosom. He is carrying it to his Father's house. He will place it beyond the reach of the storm, the wolf, and painful disease. He is tender over it. He will take the utmost care of it. He will feed it, and lead it to living fountains of water. He will wipe *away every tear* from its eyes. It shall hunger

is happy ... herd's voice, is always in its Shepher... presence, and enjoys its Shepherd's lo... Happy lamb! gracious Shepherd! glori... flock!

Beloved, the Shepherd who has your la... in his bosom still gently whispers, "*Follow* ... He spoke to you in your prosperity, but ... would not hear. He speaks to you now ... your sadness and sorrow; listen and atten... his voice. Follow him into his chambe... secret communion; there he will soothe ... solace your soul. Follow him into his ... nances where he feeds his flock, and he ... make you to lie down in green pastures ... lead you beside the still waters; he will r... your soul. Follow him in the path of tr... ... with patient spirit and steady pac...

ppy there. It was necessary that he should us try you; and you will see this by-and-by. At present believe his word; he says, "I will do you no hurt." Believe his love to you; it is too great to suffer the presence of a rival, or to allow you to injure yourself by improper attachments. Had he loved you less, he might have spared your feelings; you might have retained your loved one. Can you regret that Jesus loves you so much? Could you wish him to love you less? My friend, weep no longer; dry up your tears. Listen to your Shepherd's voice; follow in your Shepherd's footsteps. Detach your affections from earth and earthly things, and set them on those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. It is but a little while, and we shall have done with everything here. If the Lord had not taken your child *now*, you must have left it *very soon;* and if you had left it behind you in a world like this, who can tell what might have been its sufferings or its sorrows? If the Lord had not taken it from you, it may have been necessary that he should take you from it; and this might have been far worse. Your Saviour has done wisely; you will see this by-and-by. Your Saviour has acted kindly, and the time is come



rise from your
Redeemer's call, and ask, as you
mission at his feet, "Lord, what w
me to do?" We may anticipat
"Love me more. Keep closer
Speak to me more frequently and
Live for my honour. Walk by my
nothing occupy my place in yo
Rest in my love to you. Rely on
I have made you. Attend to t
have given you. Expect the me
am now preparing for you." I
us not refuse to hear thee, b
grace in such abundance that w
catch the first sounds of thy v
ready to do whatsoever thou
whatsoever whatsoever tho



A YOUNG MOTHER'S PRAYER.

OCCASIONED BY AN EXCLAMATION UTTERED BY MRS. C—— OVER HER FIRST-BORN, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE WRITER.

"LORD, bless my babe!" the youthful mother cried,
And fondly pressed her infant to her breast;
Then offered it to Him who loved and died
To give poor suffering mothers peace and rest.

It was her first-born, and she loved it well,
Admired each feature, full of strange delight;
Then turned the kindness of her God to tell,
Whose tender care had blessed her with the sight.

Perhaps she thought—"Ah! if I had been blind,
And felt my loved one on my bosom lie,
But could not see its face!—my God, how kind
To let me see my baby's lovely eye!

"Its little head had slumbered on my breast,
Its velvet cheek awakened sweet surprise,
Its ruby lips a mother's bosom prest,
Who longed to see it with her poor blind eyes.

"Or if I had been deaf, and could not hear
Its little voice, which thrills through all my soul,
How often had I shed the bitter tear,
And found it hard my feelings to control!

"To know it prattled, pleasing all around,
And calling 'Mother' with an angel's voice.



My heart has danced already
And I have seen strange b

" Or had my babe been blind,
Its mother's face, or natur
How painful and distressing
Its sightless eyeballs desti

" Or if it had been deaf, and c
My voice, which seeks to s
That were a burden I could
Though to complain, in n

" But my sweet babe has sight
Its senses and its membe
The goodness of my God in
And lay my loved one at

" I do feel grateful ; O thou
Accept the praises of my
And let me, though a sinne



.h me to train it in thy holy ways,
And early lead it to thy gracious throne;
ı, let my babe show forth my Saviour's praise,
And by it may thy holy will be done!

I would not nurse it for the world or sin,
Or see it prove an enemy to thee;
I'll early try its little heart to win,
And pray that it may consecrated be.

It was thy gift; I love it for thy sake,
And hope to see it live thy name to fear;
Mother and babe into thy keeping take,
And all through life, oh, may we find thee near!

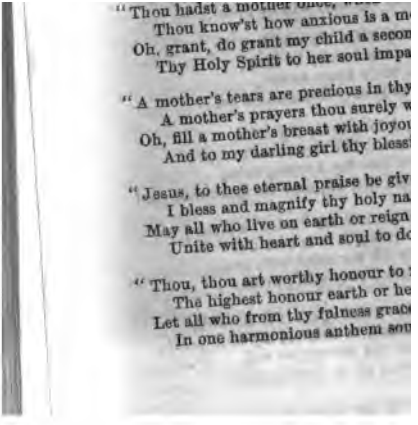
Nor let my child assume my Saviour's place;
To him my warmest love is ever due:
Blest Spirit, daily fill my mind with grace,
That Jesus' glory I may still pursue.

Lord, bless my babe! and spare it to me still,
Healthy and strong, to comfort my fond heart;
Oh, may it walk by thy preceptive will,
And in thy service all its powers exert.

'Tis thine, created by thy power alone;
As thine, I wish to treat it day by day;
Oh, may thy precious blood its sins atone,
And from its spirit purge each stain away.

Accept my feeble praise for mercies given,
And keep me near thy side through all my way;
Conduct and teach me till I enter heaven,
Nor let me from thy holy precepts stray.

A mother's heart, before a Saviour's throne,
Would thus her fondest wishes now express:



"Thou hadst a mother once, [illegible]
Thou know'st how anxious is a m
Oh, grant, do grant my child a secon
Thy Holy Spirit to her soul impa

"A mother's tears are precious in thy
A mother's prayers thou surely w
Oh, fill a mother's breast with joyo
And to my darling girl thy bless

"Jesus, to thee eternal praise be giv
I bless and magnify thy holy na
May all who live on earth or reign
Unite with heart and soul to d

"Thou, thou art worthy honour to
The highest honour earth or he
Let all who from thy fulness grac
In one harmonious anthem sou

